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# The COMMONWEAL

*A Weekly Review of Literature  
the Arts and Public Affairs*

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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### Limits to Reaction

THE WAY many of the states—most notably Pennsylvania—are passing reactionary anti-labor laws, and the assumption made in most talk about parties and candidates for the 1940 elections that America is in a strong reactionary swing, is a judgment on our state of mind fortunately not justified by all the evidence. The picture of the United States sliding in the ultra-conservative direction leaves out of account labor news. No more than a hint of recent labor activity and labor union success can be noted here, but it seems important to note it. The Appalachian coal strike was quite a strike, and the United Mine Workers were not altogether snowed under by the supposed drift. The Briggs strike was the biggest one in the auto industry since the sit-downs. At this writing it is supposedly settled through the federal mediator, and although the

Labor  
Activity

terms are not yet disclosed, the vigor of the affair does not point to a demoralized auto union. The Eastern Steamship, the warehousemen in New York and many other industrial controversies over the country indicate no relaxation in union activity. Even the rather middle class Newspaper Guild in Chicago is unbowed after six full months of contest with Hearst, and the old "Her-Ex" is showing terrible strain in the advertising statistics—off 54.2 percent for the period. The progress desired in America may not be, after all, toward greater exploitation of labor, and away from independent unionization and collective bargaining.

### Our Inadequate Relief Policies

MISSOURI provides a woeful instance of the bad relief conditions reported by the American Association of Social Workers on which we commented last week. The *St. Louis Catholic* reports that 100,000 people in the state are living in "dire destitution." The figures are unbelievable: "For the last two years relief allotments in St. Louis have averaged less than \$10 a month per person, \$4.35 a month for babies." This is bad enough, but the legislature has further cut relief appropriations so drastically for the next two years that "unless some further action is taken, [of] the thousands of persons dependent on direct relief, each will have \$1.33 a month to try to live on." Such, with due allowance for local variations, is the plight of many Americans in various parts of the country. It means that various private charities must render additional relief as an immediate stop-gap. Much as administrative efficiencies might help, it means large additional sums for public relief. A well-integrated national economy is the only long-range solution, but in the meantime the state must step in where private resources are inadequate. What irony that we should be steadily increasing our arms expenditures to defend our people from some hypothetically possible invader, at the very time we are cutting relief expenditures and abandoning so many to very real starvation—and the inevitable threat of internal disorder.

### The Neutrality Law Fog

ON MAY 1 two sections of our neutrality legislation lapsed: the one permitting the President to restrict shipment of certain articles other than armaments to belligerent states, no American vessel being allowed to carry them through trouble areas; the section enforcing "cash and carry," preventing foreign vessels from taking restricted articles (beyond arms) from our ports until ownership has actually been transferred. Permanent legislation still pro-

Automatic  
Embargo?

vides that the President should proclaim the fact whenever he finds that a state of war exists. When he does proclaim a state of war, arms shipments to trouble areas become automatically illegal. Furthermore, loans or credits to belligerent governments or factions and travel on ships of belligerents are prohibited, and the collecting of funds for aid and relief is regulated by the President. Also, at all times, armament dealers must work under license. Secretary Hull's suggestions would bring the abolition of the automatic arms embargo; Senator Pittman's, while retaining the embargo on arms, would, by applying "cash and carry" to other materials, work to the direct advantage of England, France and Japan. Both plans leave the way open (as others do even more) to partial activity of the administration in actual and prospective conflicts.

In his very intelligent testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Professor Wright of Catholic University pointed out that: "The rules of neutrality adopted by a neutral state, however, must be impartial and must be impartially applied, but their objective effect on the two belligerents need not be, indeed it generally is not, equal." There is a dilemma which has to be faced. A neutral policy of self-restriction on our part, applied equally to all nations, will affect those nations very differently. It will in fact favor one warring side to its enemy's hurt. But a flexible policy, attempting to affect warring nations equally, would be legally unneutral and would force us to take active measures assisting the nation which could not help itself. We would have to enforce a balance of power between contestants. Even utter isolation would not solve the dilemma. It could be solved by our active entrance into the contest before or during war, intervening on the side we considered the virtuous one. Remaining in the dilemma seems better and wiser now. Maintaining the automatic embargo on arms to belligerents seems wise also, to avoid as much as possible the dangers of arbitrariness and partiality. It is no small thing either, to cut off so important a source of death-dealing instruments as the United States—a humanitarian and human consideration that receives little attention.

### General Moseley's Number Called

A FEW weeks ago the *Nation* published a long editorial called "Dies in a New Rôle" which ended by supplying the Texas Representative with the telephone number of General George Van Horn Moseley. It is to be doubted whether he took the hint, but in any case he acted as though he had, and called the General to testify. Once again one is forced to question the Dies Committee's method, even to wonder whether there is here any real desire

or ability to investigate the current crop of movements which are fundamentally opposed to the essence of our traditional form of government. There are other, more dangerous, persons than General Moseley about, and we could do worse than take a leaf out of the *Nation's* book, offering Mr. Dies a few hints of our own. Who is organizing the street-riot technique which almost daily disturbs the peace in New York, Philadelphia and other American cities, sometimes under the style and title of the "Christian Front"? It is strangely reminiscent of happenings not so many years ago in German cities. When all this activity finds a coordinator, the time for mere investigation will have passed. Let us hope that that day will not come, but meanwhile, why does the daily press consider a "hush-hush" policy to be wise in this matter? A lot of Germans thought so too, nine or ten years ago. We confess that we don't know who is organizing all this, or for exactly what ends, but we suggest that here is a real field for investigation.

### Terraces, Strip Cropping, Shelterbelts

ONE ASPECT of the New Deal's farm program is beginning to pay big dividends. Those who think of soil conservation as a dodge to get around the famous anti-AAA decision should consider the latest reports. One of these from Mankato, Kansas, tells of a Department of Agriculture open house held for several thousand farmers at eleven widely separated points. After five years of successful demonstration work the Soil Conservation Service is turning over the large part of the responsibility for the program to the farmers themselves—spreading the use of contour farming and terraces and the planting of alternate strips of cover and market crops that has proved so successful in retaining soil and moisture and increasing crop yields. This is government assistance at its best. So too in the beginnings of a national shelterbelt tree-planting program in the semi-arid Great Plains area. The protection of 20,000 farms by 127,000,000 new trees from 3 to 35 feet high, and at a cost of only \$8,254,000 in emergency relief money, is no mean accomplishment.

### Will Czechs Conquer Conquerors?

AN OLD FRENCH SAYING tells us that whoever eats the Pope will die of the meal. Modern history may extend this to read that whoever eats a nation will at least have a bad attack of indigestion. For despite the most drastic censorship, it becomes apparent to the outside world that Czechoslovakia annexed is not Czechoslovakia pacified. The little republic,



now without legal existence in the eyes of its conquerors, retains enough actual existence to trouble them more and more. Answering to the growing stringency of the German occupation, which snuffs out civil prerogatives increasingly and imposes an economic pattern rigidly cut to German needs, there has come into being among the Czechs a campaign of passive resistance, quiet sabotage and reluctance to work with the aggressors which is evidently very difficult to cope with. This spirit of unblustering but determined nationalism shows itself abroad as well. Aided by private American support, the Czechoslovak pavilion has opened at the New York World's Fair; and dedicating it, former President Benes has called it "the free and independent Czechoslovakia of the near past and of the near future." Dr. Benes's unshaken confidence that peace and justice will be restored in Europe is seemingly based, not upon armed alignments, but upon the "decency and dignity" of mankind which, he holds, will make permanent tyranny impossible. That is perhaps a better dependence than the "legions" which ardent Czech emigrés are said to be planning in Poland and France. In no circumstances, probably, could the Czechs now prevail against their "protectors" with arms; but if their unmalleability to "protection" continues, they may prevail by sheer determination to remain themselves. They have done it before.

### *The Louvre Makes Its Choice*

BACK IN the less momentous days of the 'twenties, it was a favorite sport of intellectuals to compile lists of the ten—or twenty or a hundred—books each individual would take with him if he were to be banished for life to a desert isle. More recently the authorities of St. John's College, Annapolis, have had to make their now famous little list of a "hundred" great books. They admit that one of their criteria has been popularity. "To begin with the apparently trivial, a great book is one that has been read by the largest number of persons." With which one should not quarrel if it is qualified by adding "over a reasonable period of time." Of course the criterion fails miserably when the masterpieces of scientific literature are under creation. How many people have read the works of Newton? Perhaps mankind *en bloc* is competent only to judge of human, not of abstract, matters. Certainly it is interesting that this element of popular appeal should likewise have been one of the many criteria set up by the Louvre when, according to the New York *Times Magazine*, it selected the scant gross of pictures from among its thousands which is to be rushed first to safety in case of accident or threat in peace or war. That will scarcely please the more esoteric critics and the practicers of "connoisseurship"—those

great worriers over authenticity. Yet it is a human criterion, and one which in all critical judgment must never be completely neglected. To do so is a form of that treason of the learned which can produce unexpectedly grave consequences. But it is a happy portent that the Louvre should admit so human a standard in so inhuman an age.

### *Sinking of the "Thetis"*

BY ONE of the unhappiest of recorded coincidences, the spectacular and heroic *Squalus* rescues in this country were followed within a week by the sinking of the British submarine *Thetis*, taking 99 of 103 men to their death. This is the greatest single underseas disaster which has ever occurred, and there can be little doubt that among its many tragic elements the contrast with the *Squalus* affair here has imparted its own special bitterness. This has been freely indicated in British comments, both press and personal, and it is of course wholly natural. Whether there is any basis for the mounting tide of criticism against the British Admiralty cannot, of course, be determined until all the facts are known. A public inquiry will supplement the private Admiralty investigation as soon as the *Thetis* has been floated, to sift all those matters against which outspoken dissatisfaction has been voiced: the overcrowding of the ship on its test dive, the many hours intervening between the disaster and its discovery and the failure to grapple the ship to safety while part of it remained above water. In addition there remain the question of the cause of the wreck and the bewildering mystery of the failure of all but four aboard her to make their escape through the safety hatches. No findings can undo the heavy losses nor annul the personal tragedies they represent. But if there were faults and failures responsible, it will be a help for the future in bringing them to light; and if there were not, that fact will constitute one solace.

### *Burglary in London*

THE GOOD MORALIST, of whatever race and nation, must deplore the recent burglarious entry into the house of Lieutenant Colonel Sir Hugh Stephenson Unworthy Turnbull, Commissioner of Police of the City of London, when his butler was bound and gagged and several thousands of dollars' worth of jewels were taken. However it is only too likely that American readers perusing this item, though their ethical reaction to it may be correct, will yet mingle therewith a certain emotional qualification coming under the head of "Malice, excusable." There is of course no malice entertained here against Sir Hugh personally; indeed, he is very kindly remem-

bered for having thought well of some of our own police methods on his study tour to this country a few years ago. But we have been dieted too long on wry-tasting comparisons between ourselves and the law-abiding English not to send at least a tiny leer of satisfaction over the Atlantic at this unseemly occurrence. There are towns in England, we are told and told again, in which the jails have been closed for lack of patronage; the English move huge gold consignments in open trucks through the streets without guards and without molestation; the English bobbies are unarmed at all times. Mebbe so. But Commissioner Valentine's butler and jewels, if any, are still intact.

### \$5,400,000,000 for Travel

THE DEFINITELY COLOSSAL FIGURE in italics at the head of this paragraph is the estimate for United States traveling expenditures during 1939: 9 percent greater than in the historic banner year of 1937, 20 percent better than last year. Most of the money will be spent within the country this year because war jitters have been cutting down European trips. South American trips have taken up some of the slack given by the European situation, but not really much. There is now a sharp uptrend in travel to Europe, as the crisis flattens out and as advertisers dare to counter the war alarms directly. ("I have just returned from Europe" . . . says the man from Cook's." Needless to say, he found things very normal and attractive.) The tourist is one of the strangest of industries. Offhand it appears rather thoroughly unproductive. But consider the work it gives and the money it circulates! It is no wonder that the industry is growing more and more rationalized in our various states and regions, with government support and advertising rising all over. Taking in each other's laundry is an old economic custom; giving each other a good time sounds like a pleasant refinement. Let us hope that the food, shelter and clothing industries keep pace.

### Mr. Hague's Law Is Vetoed

IT TAKES longer to veto the actions of a political boss than it does to veto those of a regular legislative body, but there is always the Supreme Court. It is just about a year ago that Mayor Hague's anti-CIO fight made front page headlines in papers throughout the nation; perhaps a year isn't so long after all for a constitutional government to deal finally with so peculiar a case. It is not often that an American mayor blatantly takes power unto himself, in clear defiance of the Constitution. The puzzling thing about the Supreme Court decision is that it should

be so split up. Once more lawyers have given us a specimen of that preoccupation with the abstract which is, in itself, a merit, but which so puzzles the unphilosophical layman. Two of the justices who voted to dismiss Mr. Hague's appeal did so under the fourteenth amendment, two under the due process clause. The Chief Justice didn't worry about which grounds to prefer, but just generally concurred. Nor could those who would have sustained the appeal—Butler and McReynolds—get together on their reasons why. The practical result is clear enough; the Civil Liberties Union can go ahead and have its victory meeting in Journal Square; and the abstractions occupy a full page and a half of small type in the *New York Times*. But the most discouraging thing of all, to Mr. Hague, must be that the votes of those two "communists," Mr. Justice Douglas and Mr. Justice Frankfurter, weren't even needed, and that of the majority of five against Hague, three were appointed to the bench by presidents whose "Americanism" has never been questioned, even in Jersey City. It is, indeed, a sorry world for some of us. Perhaps legalizing pari-mutuel betting—the current Jersey City enthusiasm—is a more popular and less back-firing rallying point than the suppression of free speech.

### After Manton, What?

FORMER JUDGE MANTON of New York has been convicted of an infamous crime. The story of his misconduct makes painful and shocking reading. Threatened with financial ruin because of the depression, he seems to have fallen under temptation to apply for his own needs the boundless power belonging to him as the most important judge in the richest and most populous of the federal circuits. He has been brought to a pitiful and shameful end. But what of the others? It would be a gross misapprehension of realities completely to focus attention on this unhappy judge. He should not be viewed as a solitary figure isolated from the bribe givers. It has been said of them that they were victims of blackmail. There is absolutely no proof to substantiate any such opinion. It is probable that the bribe givers—including officers of nationally known firms—are fundamentally more corrupt than Judge Manton. In cold blood the bribe givers proved perfectly willing to buy justice. The bribe givers and their lawyers perfectly typify the kind of men who for pecuniary reasons will violate any dictate of conscience.

The bribe givers should be prosecuted and jailed. Their lawyers should be disbarred and jailed. If under the pressures of his business disasters Judge Manton proved to be corrupt, still more corrupt were the cold blooded predatory looters who were ready to buy court decisions



when they were free to reject the infamous proposals made to them by Judge Manton's intermediaries. They were free to denounce Judge Manton to the Bar Associations or to other suitable authorities. By this course of conduct they could have suffered no loss. Instead they chose to buy the vote of a judge. To them he became merely another asset. A judge is the holder of immense power. To his vicinity there tend to gravitate sycophants of every description. If he but nod for an instant, he is fawned upon and by every devious means known to the imagination of man his judgment is sought to be swayed. A great judge is a man of unbending and resistant character. He walls himself off as far as possible from the hordes of flatterers and corruptors who would seek to affect him. It is time to teach these lawyers and litigants how dangerous is the game they play in their endeavor to tamper with judges.

## Christian Democracy

ONE OF THE EVILS of our times is our growing inability to conceive things in other than political terms. The line-up of the dictatorships against the "democracies" tends to heighten such a limitation to straight thinking on the part of the American people. Then, too, there is the undeniable fact that the liberties we enjoy here in the United States—worship, speech, press, assembly—together with the right to vote, compare favorably with the democratic liberties of any other nation in the world. The big question is, here and elsewhere, whether there is genuine democracy and whether these rights are freely exercised, when so large a portion of the citizenry live under conditions of economic servitude. Millions of unemployed living on meager relief, the evils of the sharecropper system and the insecurity of so many of our workers surely tend to blur the picture of a worthy American democracy.

The needs are obvious enough. And we believe that the principles that should guide our necessary recourse to social action are found in recent papal encyclicals, which interpret the problems of our time in the light of Christian social tradition. One of the most useful means of getting in touch with these encyclicals is the newly published "Guide to the Encyclicals" \* compiled by Sister M. Claudia Carlen of Marygrove College. This handy volume lists in chronological order the encyclical letters issued between 1878 and 1937, together with the form in which they are published in English and other languages and various interpretations and commentaries on these encyclicals in books and periodicals.

The encyclical, *Graves de Communi*, issued by Leo XIII, January 18, 1901, deals specifically

with "Christian Democracy," the theme of the present National Catholic Social Action Congress. The way it deals with the subject is particularly apposite for the United States, since the problem of political liberty is not in question over here. The problem of political forms is dealt with in other encyclicals listed in Sister Carlen's book, especially *Immortale Dei* of 1885, but *Graves de Communi* came out at a time when the Church was deeply concerned at the inroads made by Socialism through its championing of social reforms. It is primarily a discussion of the difference between secular and Christian social democracy.

At the outset Leo XIII makes it plain that he is using the term "Christian Democracy" in a non-political sense. He bases this conception on "the natural law and the Gospels," which "for the very reason that they transcend the chances of human existence, must necessarily be independent of any particular form of civil government and adapt themselves to all, so long as these are right and just." The encyclical then deals with the concerted action and institutional provisions devolving upon Catholics for the protection of the poorer classes in society. The encyclical cites land banks, mutual aid societies and workingmen's associations as examples of such constructive institutions.

Justice is the keystone of such activity. The material betterment of the masses is held out as a good in itself, but one which should also have as a primary end the salvation of souls. All should take part in this most necessary work, especially the talented and the well-to-do, who "are not free to choose whether they will take up the cause of the poor or not; it is a matter of simple duty."

In order that society be reconstituted as a harmonious whole, charity, or the spirit of Christian brotherhood, must prevail. This means that in times of dire poverty and widespread suffering, like our own, almsgiving is an important part of the work. "Christian Democracy," therefore, as described in this encyclical, is a direct equivalent of non-political Catholic social action. It calls for organized though non-political action, as is indicated in the various subjects for discussion at the Cleveland Congress.

The task today, as it was forty years ago, is "to make the lives of laborers and artisans more tolerable, to enable them gradually to make some provision for themselves, to make it possible for them at home and in the world freely to fulfil the obligation of virtue and religion, to let them feel themselves to be men and not animals, Christian men and not pagans, and so enable them with more facility and earnestness to attain that *one thing necessary*, the final good for which we came into the world."

The need is obvious and the principles are at hand. We must without further delay put into practice the best possible social techniques.

\* A Guide to the Encyclicals of the Roman Pontiffs from Leo XIII to Pius XI. New York: H. W. Wilson Company.

# Congress on Christian Democracy

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The Second National Catholic Social Action Congress meets in Cleveland to discuss Christian democracy.

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By John F. Cronin, S.S.

**A**MIDST the cool breezes and refreshing hospitality of Cleveland, thousands of Catholic leaders in the field of social problems are to meet this June. Three days of brilliant and thoughtful discussion, commencing on the morning of the twelfth, promise to make momentous the Second National Catholic Social Action Congress. During these meetings every phase of the great theme of Christian Democracy will be explored.

The very title "Christian Democracy" means much to Catholic Americans. Not only does it suggest the sacred ideals embodied in centuries of tradition, but it also recalls to mind what might well be considered the parting message of Pope Pius XI, his letter to the Catholic University on this subject. Here we feel that we have an ideal wherein the twin master drives of love of God and of country can merge into a stream of fertile and impressive action. In the past we have been slandered by our enemies as a foreign group with hostile ideals and traditions; under the banner of Christian Democracy we can show that the social program of the Church is the only true foundation for the golden age which we foresee at the close of this our winter of discontent. The motto "For God and Country" has often inspired men to the heights of the sublime; it could well be chosen as the motif for this great meeting.

We do not go to Cleveland merely as a gesture of loyalty. There is a time and place for the high feelings of patriotism, but the deeper love of country is more often shown in action. Our blood surges and our heart thrills to the beat of martial music, but the soldier in the slime of the trenches is doing more than those who talk and parade. So likewise our task is one of action, not merely of talk. There is an enemy from within more dangerous than any armed force that ever opposed our fathers in battle. Strong armies may subdue a people and leave untouched their spirit, but the slow, gnawing cancer of economic insecurity devours the very vitals of a nation. Like a strong man wasted by disease, it remains but a flabby hulk, clutching at the shadows of a glory that has passed. Such an enemy attacks us today. We are an army of defense.

This defense is not political in a partisan sense, for Christian Democracy is above the narrow

limitations of the temporal and transitory. No Catholic party will emerge from the Cleveland meeting. Senators may well pass these days in calm serenity, with no fear of a barrage of frantic messages which might leave them perplexed and bewildered. Pope Leo XIII, in his famous encyclical on this very subject, written less than forty years ago, insisted strongly on this point. To the great crusading Leo, the ideal of Christian social reform was primarily a dedication to the practice of justice and charity. Catholics were to accept the form of government of their nation, always provided that it was not essentially unjust, but they were to try to infuse new life into it by the practice of the living principles of justice. Their aim was the renewal of the spirit, not a mere change of external form.

Only the willfully blind assert that the present social order is ideal. There are those who can recline in the comforts of luxury and berate the starving for disturbing their serenity. Even today there are people who feel that the unemployed are simply men devoid of energy and ambition, mere parasites living upon the credulity of the community. The dark glasses of prejudice can still exclude the spectacle of undernourishment and underprivilege. Our sentimental cinema can dramatize the criminal careers of "those who had no chance," but the realistic man of the world saves such thoughts only for his lighter moments. The black blight of race discrimination and of slums, the cold treason perpetrated by promising youth opportunity and age security, the ghastly contrast between the growing weakness of democracy and the apparent vigor of the dictator states, all these signs and portents on the wall can be passed over as evil dreams likely to disturb our revelry and riot. But nations that have so acted have perished.

## *We would be free*

To those who will see it, the modern world presents the vital problems of obtaining security. Unless a man can secure enough to achieve dignity and stability in his daily relations, can he be assured of the time and energy for the salvation of his soul? Can we preach the ideal of Nazareth, when the youth of today cannot even marry? After reading the great messages of the Popes, can a



man overlook the fact that the crushing burden of insecurity no less than the corroding bitterness of economic injustice places great and even appalling handicaps before the Christian men of today? When Pope Pius XI issued his stirring plea for a renewal of high family morality, he was far from unimindful of the economic conditions which often make normal family life a matter of heroic virtue. For these and similar reasons the sovereign Pontiffs have constantly stressed the intimate connection between social reform and religious observance in the modern world.

Recent political developments have emphasized to a still greater degree the urgent necessity for immediate social reform. During the Post-War years, nations have been rushing with almost breakneck speed to tear down the fabric, so painfully constructed, of political democracy and religious freedom. Inspired mainly by the quest for economic security, frustrated peoples have sought their dictators, their men of steel, who would give them bread and work. Political freedom as expressed in parliamentary democracy seemed only to afford talk when action was an imperative necessity, and so they took the way of direct and incisive action. The warning uttered once before in the day of temptation, "Man does not live by bread alone," was forgotten, or submerged in the clamorous din of the hungry and the desolate. The keys to the triple sanctuary of home, school, and the Church were yielded to the impious, and the consequences of this action were realized only after sacrilege and profanation became the order of the day. Time and again the voice of the late Pontiff, truly a martyr to the social crisis of today, was raised in warning to an unheeding world. Faced with these facts we must realize that unless economic freedom and democracy become a reality in our land, our political freedom and democracy may not long survive. After seeing what has happened to the Church in other lands, we meet in Cleveland with a sense of urgency and sober determination.

#### *United We Stand*

The great problem before the Cleveland convention is that of achieving unity in our efforts toward social reform. Sometimes it is easy to obtain unity. Communists do it simply by having and following a party line. Unfortunately such an easy path is not available to us. They may follow expediency; we must follow the sacred and high demands of truth. We cannot simply submerge our differences by the device of a majority vote, with the minority faithfully acquiescing to the opposite of what they but a minute before in conscience professed. Rather we must be loyal to principle, reaching agreement only by conviction, submitting to no merely human authority where the sacred rights of truth are in question. At times

our difficult problems are solved by the guiding hand of ecclesiastical decision, safeguarded by the eternal Wisdom promised as a guide for the Church of God, but such decisions in special and detailed matters are rare. The great principles of social justice we have been taught in brilliant encyclicals, but the detailed application is left by Divine Providence largely to our own energy and skill. Such is the task before us.

We are divided in many serious ways. For example, there are those among us who believe that the cooperative movement is to be the salvation of society. At the same time there is one very energetic Catholic editor who maintains that it is anti-Catholic. Distributists tell us that decentralization of industry and return to a balanced industrial-agrarian economy alone will save us from ruin. Yet distinguished Catholic professors give favorable reviews to books which promise an economy of abundance by some variation on the technocratic ideal. One group decries the centralization of power in Washington; others assert that only by the strengthening of political power can the tremendous concentration of economic power be made to serve the common welfare. Most Catholics interested in social problems put great stress on the bettering of labor conditions, but there are some who maintain that this approach may well be superficial. To this latter group the basic questions of price policy and business depressions must be answered before labor can have security and justice. Finally, there is the bitterly disputed question of money. Some would take the Biblical saying that it is the "root of all evil" and apply this to economic as well as moral evil. Others maintain that the monetary system is essentially indifferent, being able neither to help nor to hurt the business system.

These differences are a rock of scandal and of stumbling for many Catholics. This is not merely true of the uneducated; for highly educated Catholics, lay and clerical, feel that social reformers must put their own house in order before they expect followers. Reading the popular Catholic magazines, they are bewildered by the contradictions and the varieties of views proposed. The preceding paragraph listed ten divergent viewpoints; frequently there are as many separate and unrelated schools of thought as there are different opinions. Certainly the perpetuation of these conflicts will do little to accomplish the ideal of unified Catholic thought as a prelude to unified Catholic action.

#### *Counsel of despair*

Many draw from these facts the discouraging conclusion that nothing can be done in the social field. They argue from the very fact of dispute among experts to the hopelessness of any attempt. This counsel of despair is but the first step to the

fatal inertia which leads by reaction to the totalitarian state. Those who propose it as a sound approach might be shocked to reflect that an identical argument is used against the Catholic faith. The variety of religious beliefs is used as a proof that none of them is right. Yet while we recoil from such an interpretation of faith, we glibly apply it to social problems. In the case of faith, we say that unbelief has for its natural causes education, temperament, dispositions and the like. We assert that a sufficiently energetic inquirer, open and unbiased, could see the intellectual truth of the Church. Yet we rarely ask ourselves if a similar procedure would be possible in the case of the social problems of the day. Rather we give a counsel of despair that in other lands has meant religious suicide.

It is not too rash to assert that our economic difficulties could be resolved by a sincere, energetic and unprejudiced approach. Of these adjectives, the most important perhaps is "energetic." The field of social philosophy is literally immense, and only by the most diligent studies can a man hope to master it. The easier path is that of the partisan, holding the more doggedly because the less rationally to some emotional bias or one-sided creed. The love of party more than the love of truth is often an easy path, but it is the path of decline for a great nation.

Specific application of the above principle would require nothing less than a book and there is space here for only a few thousand words. Certainly such a book is needed today. Nevertheless, some general ideas of procedure can be outlined. In the matter of cooperatives, the most important source material is current history in England, Sweden, Denmark and Nova Scotia. Corroborating material can be found in the United States. Impartial studies exist which tell of the degree of success attained by various phases of this movement, the reasons for that success, and the problems to be faced in the United States. A student reading this literature is at once stripped of extreme views. He subscribes neither to the opinion that the cooperative movement is the only salvation of humanity, nor to the opinion that it is but Russian collectivism in disguise. In the United States he foresees a definite but quite limited future for this movement.

Similar studies can be made of distributism. It should not be too hard to find an answer to the question: could our present population be supported without a large degree of commercial farming? Or, how great are the political and economic (and even moral) obstacles to complete decentralization of industry? After answering these questions, a student will again find himself in the middle, seeing the values inherent in both extreme views, and working out a plan to save the virtues of both with the vices of neither. In the field of

labor problems, much progress can be made by the simple distinction that in some industries, labor cost is so relatively high that it must be considered as a primary cost (and possibly an excessive cost) of production. In other industries, perhaps a majority, labor costs are relatively secondary. Here wage increases could be considered rather from the point of view of purchasing power.

Further application of this method might prove irritating. It is unfortunate that questions have to be opened, only to be dismissed by an inadequate sentence or two. But the general lesson is clear: that by a detailed and painstaking study of the facts a student usually finds that generalizations err because they consider but one set of truths. The solution is usually attained by some distinction or qualification which embraces all the facts. The simplicity of such distinctions is often deceptive; they are often obtained only by hard and persevering study of a field. But information can be had, if one only seeks it. It is not difficult to discover whether or not the banking system in general, and the Federal Reserve banks in particular, are making enormous profits. General complaints against government spending take on a new light when examined under a different heading, "spending for what?" Hence the answer to our problem is the painstaking study and the open discussion of all the facts on a question.

With such questions opened up, it is hard to see how a thinking Catholic can avoid attending such a convention as that which opens in Cleveland. Here is the opportunity for exchanges of views, open and frank discussion, private conversations and the like, which will impart badly needed unity to Catholic social thought. In such a matter, opportunity rapidly metamorphoses into duty.

Little need be said about the speakers who will lead the convention. They are universal and representative, giving authoritative Catholic viewpoints, lay and clerical, university and secular. What leader then can afford to remain away?

### *Sonnet*

To break the bread of friendship may be sweet,  
To drink the wine of love; for crusts and lees  
Are but the bitter smallest part of these;  
And laughter is a fragrant fruit to eat,  
With seeds like pomegranates. But the meat  
Of sorrow builds the shoulders and the knees,  
Strengthens the back, the arm. Plucked from no trees,  
Pressed from no grape, ground from no winnowed wheat,

Sorrow is living food that must be slain,  
Is living flesh that must be torn apart,  
With its own pain to nourish greater pain,  
With its own heart to feed an anguished heart.  
You who are hungry, taste and find it good,  
This salty meat, this raw and sinewy food.

LOUISE OWEN.



# Social Justice and the State

What is *social* justice? An exact definition has been the preoccupation of the last four decades in Catholic thought. Here are the results.

By John A. Ryan

THE CONCEPT of social justice is not clearly fixed in the minds of most Catholics. Perhaps it is most generally taken to mean justice to social classes, especially the weaker classes, as against strict justice for individuals. Up to a few years ago, the term was more generally used by non-Catholics than by Catholics. Indeed, the former seem to have had almost a monopoly on the phrase.

In his commentary on the Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," entitled "Die Soziale Enzyklika," the Reverend Othmar von Nell-Bruening, S. J., observed that in theological treatises the concepts of social justice and social charity have been, as yet, only slightly studied and that, therefore, there rests upon theological science the important task of building up and deepening the Catholic teaching on both. Prior to the appearance of "Quadragesimo Anno," almost the only systematic discussion of social justice came from the pen of the Reverend Charles Antoine, S. J., in his "Cours d'Économie Sociale," published almost forty years ago. Father Antoine described social justice in substantially the same terms as the Holy Father. He declared that social justice means not merely the promotion of the common good as a unified entity, but also the common good as comprising the welfare of all society's members.

Some twenty years after the appearance of Father Antoine's book, one of his countrymen, the Reverend A. Michel, professor of theology at the University of Lille, produced a little book under the title, "La Question Sociale at les Principes Théologiques." The secondary title of the volume was "Justice Legal et Charité." Father Michel disposes of *la justice sociale* in eight pages and puts the adjective in quotation marks. His conclusions are: most of the obligations which some writers put under the head of social justice really pertain to the virtue of charity; the term "social justice" is not in conformity with good Catholic usage, as prescribed by Pope Pius X, and it ought to be discontinued. To be sure, Father Michel's work was published ten years before the appearance of "Quadragesimo Anno."

One of the greatest achievements of our late supremely great Pontiff was to give social justice a definite place in the category of virtues and to make Catholics acquainted with the concept. In

this connection I desire to bring forward some of the most striking parts of a long article in "Dossiers de l'Action Populaire," October 25, 1938. Its title is "La Notion de Justice Sociale" and its author is the Reverend André Rocardes, S. J. It presents incomparably the most enlightening and satisfactory discussion of the term and the subject that I have seen.

At the beginning of his study, Father Rocardes notes that the expression *social justice* has only recently appeared in pontifical documents. Pius XI was the first Pope to give it official recognition. He uses it eight times in "Quadragesimo Anno" and several times in "Atheistic Communism." Father Rocardes then asks whether the place given to the phrase by Pius XI implied progress in doctrine as well as in terminology. He answers his own question in the affirmative.

What is the *object* of social justice according to the thought of the Pope? Undoubtedly, it is the common good. What does the common good mean? In the Pope's answer to this question, says Father Rocardes, we have the element that is new in the papal teaching on social justice. As usually understood, the common good signifies the good of society as a whole. This is, indeed, the primary object of social justice, but Pius XI indicates that social justice includes also the good of *all and of each*. The collective good is not sought as an end in itself but for the sake of each of the members of society. This is the second aspect of the common good. In passing, it is worthy of note that Father Antoine gave this same twofold interpretation of the common good and the corresponding twofold duties of social justice, more than forty years ago. The *material* object of social justice, says Father Rocardes, comprises goods and advantages for all classes, while its *formal* object is the production of this prosperity for the community as a whole and for each and all individuals.

Turning from the object of social justice to its subjects, that is, those who are bound by its precepts, Father Rocardes declares that they are individuals, associations and rulers, according to their opportunities, office and functions. All these are obliged to promote the common good as a whole. Those who are charged with the duty of promoting the common good distributively are the individual members of society, also social institutions

and finally the state. Father Rociaries seems to hold that the state is the most important of those three subjects or agents of social justice on behalf of the individual members of society.

#### *The various sorts of justice*

How then does social justice, under the aspect just described, differ from distributive justice? Mainly, answers Father Rociaries, inasmuch as it binds individuals and social groups, as well as the state, while the obligations of distributive justice fall only upon the state.

The author has a long discussion of the relation of social justice to legal justice. He rejects the opinion which has been fairly common among theological writers that these two terms are identical in meaning. He maintains that legal justice covers only one of the two objects of social justice; that is, the common welfare as of the whole community. In addition, social justice aims at promoting the well-being of each and all, particularly by a more equitable division of the wealth of this world. And it is here above all, says Father Rociaries, that social justice incontestably differs from legal justice.

How then would Father Rociaries define social justice? In these words: "Social justice is the virtue which governs the relations of the members with society, as such, and the relations of society with its members; and which directs social and individual activities to the general good of the whole collective body and to the good of all and each of its members."

In my opinion, this is the most precise and comprehensive definition of social justice that has yet been formulated.

In the concluding paragraphs of his article, Father Rociaries declares that the term *social justice* represents not merely a progress in terminology but a genuine doctrinal progress, or, if one prefers the expression, a more exact unfolding of social Catholic doctrine.

The place which Father Rociaries assigns to the state in conformity with his conception of social justice is very large. He makes the practice and enforcement of social justice depend to a very great extent upon the state, particularly in the realm of economics. He takes this position in evident conformity with the teaching of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI.

In "Rerum Novarum" Pope Leo declared: "The first duty, therefore, of the rulers of the state should be to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the commonwealth, shall be such as to produce of themselves public well-being and private prosperity." In the same encyclical, he gave his remarkable description of the functions of the state: "Whenever the general interest of any particular class suffers, or is threatened with evils,

which can in no other way be met, the public authority must step in to meet them." Social justice in both senses is implicit in both these extracts.

The following excerpts from the Encyclical on "Atheistic Communism" exhibit the relation between social justice and the state, and also one very suggestive illustration of the state's economic functions:

In reality, besides commutative justice, there is also social justice with its own set obligations, from which neither employers nor workingmen can escape. Now it is of the very essence of social justice to demand from each individual all that is necessary for the common good. But just as in the living organism it is impossible to provide for the good of the whole unless each single part and each individual member is given what it needs for the exercise of its proper functions, so it is impossible to care for the social organism and the good of society as a unit unless each single part and each individual member—that is to say, each individual man in the dignity of his human personality—is supplied with all that is necessary for the exercise of his social functions. If social justice be satisfied, the result will be an intense activity in economic life as a whole, pursued in tranquillity and order. This activity will be proof of the health of the social body, just as the health of the human body is recognized in the undisturbed regularity and perfect efficiency of the whole organism. But social justice cannot be said to have been satisfied as long as workingmen are denied a salary that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families; as long as they are denied the opportunity of acquiring a modest fortune and forestalling the plague of universal pauperism; as long as they cannot make suitable provision through public or private insurance for old age, for periods of illness and unemployment. (*Paragraphs 51 and 52.*)

It must likewise be the special care of the state to create those material conditions of life without which an orderly society cannot exist. The state must take every measure necessary to supply employment, particularly for the heads of families and for the young. To achieve this end, demanded by the pressing needs of the common welfare, the wealthy classes must be induced to assume those burdens without which human society cannot be saved nor they themselves remain secure. However, measures taken by the state with this end in view ought to be of such a nature that they will really affect those who actually possess more than their share of capital resources, and who continue to accumulate them to the grievous detriment of others. (*Paragraph 75.*)

The general principles above quoted from Leo and Pius and the particular illustration drawn by the latter from unemployment, taken together, show that in present-day conditions the state should be regarded as by far the most important agent and instrument of social justice.



# "I'm Workin' My Way Tru' Collitch"

How publicity supplements athletics in providing scholarships.

By John Lodge, Jr.

I'M WORKIN' my way tru' collitch, but I don't sell sandwiches, shoe polish or subscriptions. I do it in 1939 fashion: I sell the college, itself! I am one of several hundred young men in America who are getting an education by helping the alma mater keep its head above water. I write publicity. And I write it like a veteran Hollywood press agent, for I write publicity in a field where the competition is stronger—and the code of ethics weaker—than the competition between movie stars ever was!

More than five hundred small colleges in America are being slowly and surely squeezed out of existence by the pressure of competition from the large, state-subsidized universities. These small schools, once able to compete on equal terms with any other, large or small, are now unable to keep up with the larger and more notorious institutions. As a consequence, students are flocking by the thousands to the universities, where they can go to class with Joe Zilovich, All-American tackle, and play with million-dollar instruments for splitting atoms.

To offset the "superior advantages" of the larger schools, my alma mater, which happens to be Catholic and which I shall call Bilbon College, has been forced to install (as have hundreds of others) in the most impressive office on the campus, a publicity department that employs seven persons and operates at an expense of more than four hundred dollars a month. And this in a school with an enrollment of less than 700!

Our publicity department, which goes under the impressive title of "Bilbon News Service," was founded two years ago for the purpose of publicizing the fact that Bilbon, for many years in the "cellar" of three athletic conferences, was about to emerge and was headed for big things in an athletic way. A high-powered local radio sports commentator was appointed director of the new department at a salary of \$200 a month.

At first he had as an assistant only one student, who licked stamps, carried messages and took care of other little chores, but soon the need for general publicity was found to be so great that five others were taken on, all with tuition and expenses paid.

I was hired for an ability to write feature stories that city editors would accept when they

had no room for real news. Another lad was hired for his ability to make the pokings-about of professors seem important. A third was taken on as a photographer and was supplied with complete equipment for taking, developing, enlarging and printing pictures of all kinds. A fourth got a job as an all-round hack writer, while a fifth was hired to do nothing but clip newspaper items and keep track of the various other kinds of publicity that the college was to get. The division of labor was as complete as in an automobile factory.

We laid in a supply of impressive letterheads, carbon paper, a telephone book, a newspaper directory and some stamps, and we were ready to go. During the following months the seven of us pounded out dozens upon dozens of stories, took hundreds of pictures and sent scores of letters. We besieged city editors, country editors, sports editors and society editors; everyone who had anything to do with the publication of a periodical got his daily bulletin from the Bilbon News Service.

And we were only getting started. When we finally began to function smoothly, we found that we were placing material in eight daily papers in three cities, with at least three of them carrying some mention of Bilbon every day. By establishing the right "contacts," our releases were placed on a state-wide wire service, where they reached twenty-eight small town editors.

Our fast-talking director arranged for weekly Bilbon hours on two radio stations. Student talent sang, whistled, snapped its fingers and tap danced, all for the greater honor of Bilbon, the greatest cultural institution in the Midwest.

And when there was nothing happening at Bilbon worth publicizing, we made it up. For instance, lacking one story to fill my quota one day last fall, I struck up a conversation with one of our science professors, hoping to learn of the purchase of some new gadget or the development of some process that might be worthy of a story. After disappointing me in the matter of a story, the professor sat down to chat and dropped a remark about a rather insignificant incident that had occurred that day. The item was certainly far from newsworthy, but when he told it, an idea for a feature flashed through my mind.

Like the typical movie reporter, I dashed back to the office and ran a story off on the typewriter.

That story appeared in every daily newspaper in the United States and Canada that is served by one of the large press services; it was syndicated in England, and for all we know it was published in other European countries. It was used as a filler by the *Reader's Digest* and as a feature in *Time* and *College Humor*. And yet, except for the vague idea that the professor had given me, that story was completely faked—a calm, cold lie.

There were several other stories on which we got dozens of columns of publicity in papers from coast to coast that were, for the most part, as trumped up as the first. I can't repeat the stories without revealing Bilbon's identity.

#### *Help from the athletic department*

Of course, the publicity department didn't carry the full burden of putting Bilbon on the map. It had a great deal of assistance from the athletic department, for instance, which cooperated by "acquiring," with a few well-placed dollars, four outstanding athletes. (And I do mean outstanding, for two of them were members of teams that represented the United States in the 1936 Olympics and all four are scheduled to appear in the 1940 games.) The names of all four of these gentlemen are always good for headlines, we found, and their pictures are always acceptable to sports editors. Other items that editors would accept willingly, we discovered, were stories about the expenditure of large sums of money, be it for scientific instruments or shoes for needy students, and pictures which depicted strong emotion or action.

So we gave them pictures of action. And we gave them pictures of emotion, romance and anything else they would print. Every student in the chemistry department was lined up with a beaker in his hand and a grin on his face to pose for pictures for the Sunday rotogravure section. We acted on the theory that "all publicity is good publicity."

At Christmas time we sent out more than four hundred stories to the home town papers of non-resident students. We made every student in the college look like an All-American athlete and the president of the student council. And we got results. And now we have four hundred happy students who will return next year with their younger brothers and their friends.

Perhaps our greatest *coup d'état*, however, was what we call the "radio deal." A local radio station obtained a sponsor to finance the broadcasting of Bilbon football games. At the close of the football season we, ourselves, obtained a sponsor who would broadcast the basketball games. Then, at the close of the basketball season, we arranged with the station to keep the lines from the campus to the studio intact, for which we would pay them \$11.40 a month operating expenses and in return

for which they would guarantee us two programs a week from the campus.

Radio listeners are now brought directly into Bilbon classrooms, listen in at convocations, hear open forum discussions, and get a general idea of what an all-round fine place Bilbon is. Thus for \$11.40 we get perhaps a thousand dollars worth of radio publicity on a powerful station, while the state university, which maintains its own station, probably doesn't get any more for a hundred times as much money.

The most remarkable effect of this campaign is the change it has wrought on once staid, scholarly and retiring professors. From the lowliest instructor to the highest-paid department head, all are now clamoring to see their names in print. They would push peanuts with their noses for a headline and for a dry review in a scientific journal they expect a six-column streamer in the daily papers. There probably isn't one of them who doesn't keep a scrapbook. In order to forestall complaints to the administration that the publicity department has been playing favorites among the faculty, we have inaugurated a system whereby each professor is called upon each week to sign a written statement to the effect that the publicity for his department has been satisfactory!

But has the publicity department really accomplished anything? Has it made any tangible or substantial contributions to Bilbon?

Last spring the man-in-charge-of-clipping-and-keeping-track reported that during nine months we had derived more than \$80,000 worth of free publicity from the daily papers of our own city alone! Meanwhile the enrollment has leaped from 685 last year to 783 this year, an increase of nearly twenty percent.

It may be questioned whether a college is justified in using these means to obtain students.

However, that is not my problem. I am working my way tru' collitch very pleasantly, thank you, and I am picking up a few points that I may be able to use later on.

#### *Today*

Today my thoughts  
Are swift and cool  
As goldfish in  
A lily pool

Tomorrow, like as not,  
They'll be  
Brown turtles blinking  
Hard at me.

And I shall be  
As dull as they  
And blink back, too.  
But oh, today.

SISTER M. PHILIP, C.S.C.



# Family Security for America

How family security systems work in other countries and why we need such a system here.

By Harold Maslow

IT IS NOT sufficiently recognized that our large families require some form of salary supplement because our present wage system does not usually provide them with an adequate income from their living needs. Economists differ widely in their theories of how wages are determined, but all agree that the workers' needs play but a small rôle in the wage-setting picture today. The trade unions introduce the element of need in their wage palavers as much as possible, but they can now only use as a basis for negotiations the needs of the average family with two or three children, thus handing over to the bachelors and the childless couples a surplus which could more justly be given to larger families. Under the present economic setup it is practically impossible to set up the need of the large family as the wage negotiating base, for industry cannot now afford such high scales. The plain unvarnished truth is that our economic institutions have not been adequately geared to our older institution, the family.

The brutality to the family of our wage system has been recently measured by the National Resources Committee in a valuable report on "Consumers' Income in the United States." This study of family incomes in 1935 shows a neat reversal of the elementary rule of social justice that income be directly related to living needs: the data indicates that the smaller the family, the more income it has for living necessities. The average unmarried individual has \$1,280 to spend on himself; the average childless man and wife each have \$774 to spend; the couple with one or two children has \$542 per family member; the family with three or four children can spend \$355 per capita; while the family of seven or more persons has only \$221 available for each member. Though each child costs proportionately less to support, and though a child's living expenses are smaller than an adult's, yet these considerations obviously account for only a minor part of the 350 percent range between the per capita spendable income of the childless couple and the large family. The National Resources Committee did not cover in these computations the families receiving relief; if included, they would have further widened this spread in income.

Workers with large families require some spe-

cial economic device to supplement their inadequate wages. In the words of Pope Pius XI:

Every effort must therefore be made that fathers of families receive a wage sufficient to meet adequately ordinary domestic needs. If in the present state of society this is not always feasible, social justice demands that reforms be instituted without delay which will guarantee every adult working man just such a wage. In this connection We might utter a word of praise for various systems devised and attempted in practice, by which an increased wage is paid in view of increased family burdens, and a special provision is made for special needs.

The phrase "special provision" certainly does not include the doubtful beneficence of the relief rolls, the only recourse available in this country for large, needy families, now that an old-fashioned form of family security, child labor, has been to a large extent removed by our child labor laws. The late Federal Emergency Relief Administration's census of the relief population showed a disproportionately large number of our problem group to be on relief, and, undoubtedly, the considerable number of relief applicants who are forced to ask for supplementary relief in spite of their having private employment include many large families. The uncertainty, the inadequacy and the social stigma of relief are definitely not conducive to the proper upbringing of children, nor to the integrity and independence of the family. However, no important movement has developed here—outside, perhaps, of an incipient drive in the years immediately preceding the depression—to provide large families with a special form of wage supplementation on a more suitable plane than general relief, in spite of the obvious worthiness of their case. We have done so for the aged (old age assistance and old age insurance), for workers unemployed through no personal failing, for crippled children, for the blind, for dependent children and for soldiers and sailors. Our large families need a new social insurance, the family security system, to provide periodic subsidies, as a legal right and on a self-respecting basis. It may be pointed out that such a law would give an aid to low-income families which is already granted to the upper bracket families; for the federal government now gives special subventions to families with incomes over \$2,500 in the guise

of an income tax exemption amounting to \$400 for each child.

#### *Family security abroad*

The family security system is by no means a novel social invention; a number of foreign countries, notably France, Belgium and Italy, have had for some time such social insurance, called by them the family allowance system. France enjoys the most developed family security system now covering about 40 percent of the workers and dispensing grants for 869,000 children. The present compulsory law passed in 1932 was preceded by a growth of voluntary family funds, the first of which seems to have been instituted in 1854 by a certain M. Hamel at his factory. Other industrialists, especially Catholic employers, followed his example, and later equalization funds were organized on an industrial or regional basis to obviate the danger of discrimination in the employment of family men when the employer directly pays the allowances to his workers. The equalization fund is a separate entity which dispenses the benefits and collects the employer contributions as a percentage of the total payroll, or according to the number of employees, so that an employer gains nothing by hiring bachelors instead of married men. The law today requires all employers in stated industries to join an equalization fund, but all industries have not yet been covered. Although the Ministry of Labor supervises these funds and sets the minimum grants, the funds have a good deal of autonomy.

For industry as a whole, the employer contribution amounts up to about 2 percent of the total payroll; the employee does not pay any contribution. Workers receive a periodic grant from the funds for each child on a progressively increasing scale, the second child securing a larger grant than the first child, the third child eliciting a still higher sum than the second child and so on. Many funds also provide maternal and child welfare benefits, such as child health clinics and vacation camps for children. The length of the period for which benefits are receivable varies according to the number of days of employment; the law does not require that any allowance be made for unemployment in the calculation of the benefit period. However the benefits do not cease when an occupational disease or accident causes the worker's temporary or permanent disability, or his death. It has been estimated that the average family receives in benefits about 25 percent of the actual cost of rearing children.

The family security system in Italy appears to have had as its main reason for being the desire to soften the blow on family men of a general wage cut. The 1934 agreement between the Fascist Confederation of Industry and the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Workers, which covered a decrease in the work week to forty hours

with a corresponding reduction in wages, also provided for family funds for industrial workers, previously available only to civil servants. A 1937 decree further increased the coverage of the system. Belgium topped off a widespread development of voluntary family funds with a compulsory law in 1930. An interesting experiment is being made in Belgium to include self-employed persons under the system. The Irish Free State grants family security allowances only for civil servants, as do certain other countries.

#### *A plan for the U. S.*

Our federal government could further discharge its newly accepted obligation to provide a minimum standard of living to the population by adding a family security law to the present social security system. The need is clear: our present wage structure is not furnishing the living needs of large families, and general relief is not a desirable palliative. The method is practicable: the development of family security abroad and the popularity of our own social security laws for unemployment and old age both point to its expediency here. A federal family security law should be compulsory for employers. The small payroll tax necessary to finance the system should be shared by employer and employee. The funds collected would be distributed to large families as a legal right in a way similar to that by which unemployment compensation laws pay benefits. Essentially, this procedure would place a part of the cost of rearing the children of large families onto the shoulders of bachelors, childless couples, and small families. The rich also might be called in to share the burden, if the federal government would make a contribution from general tax funds, as the Advisory Council to the Social Security Board has recently recommended it to do for the federal old age insurance system. In view of the present cry over the tax burden it should be noted that such a contribution from general tax funds would in large part be not a fresh tax expenditure, but rather a diversion from the present "hidden" tax costs for relief, juvenile delinquency, government housing subsidies, etc., resulting from our large family problem. A federal family security law would partially right the inequities of our wage structure by making those sections of our population which are favored by our present income distribution methods turn back a part of their differentials to less favored large families.

An American family security law could be based on the federal old age insurance system, the new taxes to be collected by the present machinery and the benefits to be disbursed by the same decentralized offices that will administer the federal retirement annuities. The foreign proliferation of autonomous funds, or "caisses," with their confusing differences in benefits and taxes and their



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wasteful duplication of administrative machinery, ought not to be repeated here. The system abroad of administration by funds was more an accident of development than a result of intentional design. Nor need we imitate the foreign practice of paying benefits for each child, but rather should we make grants beginning with the fourth child. A Congress of Funds in France considered a proposal to start benefits with the third child after a study had shown that almost 60 percent of the total benefits were being concentrated on the first and second child where the need was, of course, less. The Congress did not approve this plan mainly because of the realistic consideration that it would be difficult to take away the existing benefits from any large group of workers. The Belgian Confederation of Christian (Catholic) Unions some years ago approved at its convention a family security system for only those families with more than the average number of children. Since the average American family does not live as closely to the bare subsistence level as does the average European family, we have all the more reason for concentrating the available funds on the large families.

Another strategic advantage is that such a system would necessitate a smaller tax. Assuming the present coverage of the old age insurance system, only about 7 percent of American families would receive family security benefits under such a plan. Perhaps in the future the system might be expanded to cover the third and the second child.

A national family security system raises many questions. What shall be its relationship to relief and other social security laws? What will be its effect on the birth rate? How will it react on wage levels? Will it discourage trade unionism? The writer does not feel that it need have any deleterious effect on wages or the trade union movement. The birth rate, to judge from European experience, need not be affected importantly in either direction. The coordination of the family security system with the other social security laws and especially with relief will not be an easy task, as becomes obvious from a reading of Professor Kulp's valuable book, "Social Insurance Coordination." But this difficulty merely means that special efforts are here needed.

The next step then in bringing this useful and inexpensive social insurance to America would seem to be research and planning aimed at the development of a model family security law. The second step is to educate the voters to the need and value of a family security system. Perhaps the most practical means of achieving both of these is the formation of a special "family security society" through which interested persons could together work out a suitable system and through which their efforts could be more effectively channeled.

## Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IN RESUMING my place as a regular contributor to THE COMMONWEAL, after the break occasioned by my travels in Italy and Spain, in the course of which writing was practically impossible and mailing facilities, especially in Spain, so badly disorganized that getting letters out of the country—plus censorship—was a mere gamble, I can only hope that I have retained my readers and may gain additional ones for what I have to say.

It is the same hope—a personal participation in the hope—that I have for THE COMMONWEAL itself. For one of the strongest convictions that I have formed as a result of this last journey to Europe is that journalism—as it has been generally understood and practiced in the western world, particularly in our own country—is very seriously involved in the complex crisis in which all our modern institutions and ways of life are entangled. What is more, the special function in journalism performed by independent reviews of opinion and interpretation, among which THE COMMONWEAL has earned a fairly high place, has become more important than ever, has acquired more influence, both for good and bad, than ever before.

Now, as I hold quite firmly that THE COMMONWEAL essentially belongs among those journals which affect public opinion toward good ends, toward desirable results—in spite of the fact that in some respects my personal views differ from those held by some of the editors who now control the editorial policies of this paper (indeed, just because of that fact)—I desire, in what I write, as I take up again the chore of these weekly notes, to take advantage of my recent European experiences and observations by doing all I can to make American readers more fully aware than they seem to be at present of the potential value of such a review as THE COMMONWEAL, so that they in turn will attract other readers, and thus make this lay organ of Catholic teaching and tradition stronger and more capable of performing its share of the great service which Catholicism can render to this nation—and all other nations—within and without the lines of its own professed adherents.

The full explication of the foregoing remarks would require a volume, fully documented; so that all I can hope to do in this page is to boil it all down into its essential elements, even at the risk of appearing to be arbitrary and doctrinaire. However for those readers who are patient enough to read these notes regularly (when the writer is also regularly doing them!) amplification will be provided when from time to time I return to this subject. Its vital importance justifies almost any amount of discussion.

First of all, then, let me say that censorship of the press in Europe has been greatly extended, strengthened and applied since my last visit, three years ago. It seemed in full flower then—but now! Everywhere a network of intensely restrictive, burdensome (and very expensive) espionage and censorship; suspicion, hostility and contempt

surrounds the correspondents who are doing their best to supply the American news agencies and individual great newspapers with news and views.

In some instances, notably in the case of the Spanish Civil War, these handicaps most seriously curtailed the energies of the American press (not to enter at all, at present, into the vexed question of how far the American press was affected by other considerations, such as the general sympathy for the "Loyalists" as opposed to the "Nationalists" in reporting the Spanish conflict). Anyhow, it is now quite plain that the American public received a grossly one-sided account of the Spanish situation. It did not receive from the press sufficient material upon which to ground a fairly reasonable opinion of the nature of the forces struggling for the mastery of Spain. Other such situations might be mentioned. The outcome of such experiences with the limitations of the press has produced a marked loss of confidence. And that is a tremendous blow struck at our American system of life. Unless, or until, our press recovers more liberty of action and proves that it is using that liberty in the service, first of all, of the best interests of the public (placing that end of American journalism above the ends of profit-making, or service to other interests than those of the people as a whole) our American way of life is weakened, lacks its strongest defense and is in peril of being undermined and finally supplanted by some system approaching the same conditions that prevail so widely in distracted Europe. There is grave danger of rigid censorship and control by a government becoming more and more centralized and authoritative—whether under the banner of the Democratic party or the Republican party or an amalgamation of elements from both parties. Or else—more private control and domination and private propaganda on the part of financial and industrial and political groups usurping the place formerly held by independent editors and writers.

Against all this—so I am convinced—the present owners and leaders of our American daily press should react most strongly and quickly and continuously. The key to their efforts in such a reaction toward regaining public confidence is in the strengthening of their straight news reporting. The growing importance of syndicated commentators provides evidence of the movement within journalism to place editorial influence once again in a dominant position above the advertising and business interests of the press. But the over-emphasis of some of these popular guides and instructors of public opinion, the unreliability and superficiality of others badly damage the good work done so splendidly by the more responsible and better equipped writers—notably, Walter Lippmann. And the vehement hurly-burly, the verbal Donnybrook Fair of conflicting opinions, swirling through the press columnists and hurtling over the radio lines, leads, I am afraid, more to public confusion than to public enlightenment.

No: the commentators are not really so valuable to the press, so far as its function of informing the public is concerned, as the work of honest, conscientious reporters, at home and abroad—perhaps particularly abroad, just at present. I think I have a fairly adequate knowledge of the enormous difficulties faced by our reporters abroad and

by their superior officers at home in dealing with the censorships. Just the same the ingenuity, the resourcefulness, the zeal and the ability of the best of our American editors and reporters are so evident and so available, if and when the business directors of the press are ready to back them up, that I feel confident that a vast improvement in straight news reporting can be, and will be, effected when the will to reform this weak place in our journalism becomes fully active. Even as matters stand, our American daily press is much superior to the press of Europe in giving its readers information, real news and not merely guesses, whispers, trial balloons, propaganda points of view and merely purchased ballyhoo. Our American readers, certainly of our better papers (and we have a goodly number of good papers) are in a far better position to learn facts about Europe than European readers and radio listeners, who learn little more than scandal and libels about American life and conditions.

So far I have been pleading the cause of the daily press in thus putting the function of news-gathering and distribution above that of comment and instruction. I do so because unless we have at least a few million individual men and women in the United States capable of doing their own thinking, all the fervent, eloquent comment in the world is useless to bring about the preservation of liberty and personality in America. I believe we possess that upper level of free, capable, reasoning minds. Those minds, however, cannot function adequately, or to desirable ends, unless they have facts about Europe and America in the fields of politics and public affairs in general, not merely other people's opinions, and one-sided propaganda.

Yet comment is also needed, and the independent organs of comment, therefore, are most useful. One of their jobs should be to aid, through judicious criticism, and sympathetic support, the daily newspapers. In addition, of course, Catholic papers, among them *THE COMMONWEAL*, whose duty it is to be channels of distribution for the central force of unity in western civilization, the teachings of the Church, have a most special task to perform in this hour of universal crisis and change.

Now I am distressed to learn—no secret, I think, should be made of the fact—that this journal, as many times before in its brief yet significant career, is facing a financial crisis of its own. To continue, it needs, it must have, a stronger support on the part of its present friends and well-wishers. It must ask those friends to gain recruits for their ranks. For *THE COMMONWEAL* to be driven from the field of public action at such a time would be a blow not merely to its editors, contributors and readers—but, in a very real sense, to the whole cause of Catholic revival in literature, journalism and the intellectual arena in general. It would be marked down as a failure—another failure in a fairly long list of such efforts—of American Catholicism. It should not be so. Surely, it will not be so. At any rate, such is my conviction, as I ask my readers for another chance to give them, as best I may, my own observations and reflections concerning the world in crisis, and the Catholic Church at work, as ever through the centuries, to solve that crisis in the only really desirable manner: the Christian way of life.



## Communications

### MATHEMATICAL APTITUDES

Chicago, Ills.

TO the Editors: The following quotation might be of interest to those of your readers who read your editorial paragraph, "Mathematical Aptitudes," in *THE COMMONWEAL* of June 2. It is taken from "William Allingham—A Diary" (Macmillan, 1907), page 207.

"1872.

"January 2—Bright, vernal. To Carlyle at 3. We walked to Hyde Park. He spoke about a curious old Scotchwoman Susy, a blacksmith's daughter. She could do quadratic equations in head, without any mathematics; when she had to solve a question she *thwarted it*, that was her explanation of her method. She wrote poetry, and used to say, 'Burns and me are pure nature.'

"Sir Charles Johnston, 'a rich, wild man,' gave Susy a kail-garden."

EUGENE A. MORAN.

### CATHOLICS IN TRADE UNIONS

Flushing, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I hope I too shall not be considered "difficult" by my friend John Cort if I appear in the lists on the side of Tom Barry. (*THE COMMONWEAL*, May 5, 19, June 2.)

The root of John's trouble is an incomplete grasp on the nature and purpose of man and human work, plus an unwarranted interpretation of the labor encyclicals as the Ultima Thule of social reconstruction. They do not pretend to be anything more than a statement of the irreducible minimum of conditions under which industrialism is tolerable. To clear the field, let us see how specifically "human" the goals of the ACTU are.

John cited "decent working conditions." Suppose that every factory worker and his family were adequately housed, fed and assured of provision for old age. Suppose the worker worked in a "model" factory, on a forty-hour week. Suppose, for good measure, that he had an hour for lunch, rest periods morning and afternoon, music while he worked, etc., etc. I think such a situation would constitute "decent working conditions" to the satisfaction of the ACTU. But would all this eliminate industrialism's "degradation of the worker into a sub-human robot"? Not at all. As for "collective bargaining," if all the workers were to take over all the management, ownership and profit of the factory, would that gain them a human status, as Tom uses the term? Not at all. The only thing which makes work "human" and thus distinguishes it from the work of a robot is the application of the intellect, will and creative faculties of the workman to the product, which impresses upon it a distinctively human quality. That is part of what Tom means by a "Catholic philosophy of labor."

The factory worker does not design the product, nor the machine which makes it; he "makes" only a part of the product and sometimes never even sees it completed. He has an irreducible minimum of opportunity to affect the thing upon which he "works" in a specifically human way,

namely by the exercise of his own intellect, will and creative faculties with respect to the product. So he remains after all the "sub-human robot" which Tom calls him, regardless of working conditions and cooperative ownership. In a way the chattel slave craftsmen of old civilizations were engaged in a more specifically "human" work than is the "free" factory worker of today.

John says Tom ignores "guilds." Traditionally, guilds are associations of responsible workmen, owners of their means of production and substantially free to use their individual creative faculties, intellects and wills even when working on a common plan, for instance a medieval cathedral. But the necessary ingredient for the creation of guilds, the responsibility of the individual workman, is an unknown quantity in the ACTU philosophy. I know what to expect by way of reaction to these ideas, so let's put the matter plainly. The ACTU has no right to draw a curtain across the vision of the factory worker at a point dictated by expediency, "practical" considerations or the limits of the leader's own vision. Such a curtain is not drawn across the worker's vision with respect to his future life. The possibility of a full human life lies considerably this side of eternity, and there is no logic in skipping over that goal.

Furthermore it is entirely possible that a factory worker right here and now, if he was but given the "Catholic philosophy of labor," could put it into practice at once for his own benefit. To make this change we would not have to revolutionize a whole social institution like chattel slavery. We have only to inform the one man and, given a modicum of self sufficiency, the personal revolution can be accomplished. The homesteads at Granger, King City, various *Catholic Worker* locations and numerous independent ventures are ready for the worker who is able, the requirements of such a life considered, to make the change.

Such a revolution is real. It frees the faculties with which the Creator endowed man for the purpose of carrying out a Divine plan of society, not a money-making industrial system. Otherwise the ACTU merely encourages the factory "hand" to become a more contented collectivized "robot" and no more.

R. E. SCOTT.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: John Cort's reply to my query on "the duty to join a trade union" is accepted in the same spirit in which it was written, one of friendly discussion.

I am not convinced. The *right* of collective bargaining does not necessarily impose upon the workman the *duty* of collective bargaining. No one is obliged *per se* to exercise a right. There may be cases where a man must yield to the superior rights of others for the common good, but each of these cases must be judged individually in the light of the attending circumstances.

A duty imposes a moral obligation upon a man and makes him guilty of a sin if he neglects it. Against what natural, positive or ecclesiastical precept does a man sin who does not join a union? A union is a means to an end. If that end can be gained by other means, certainly no one would claim that he still has a duty to form a union. As things stand today we must lend every effort to urge,

promote, initiate movements to draw the Catholic workers to unite for their own protection. But I do not feel that we can burden their consciences by demanding the joining of a union as a strict moral duty.

The authorities whom Mr. Cort enumerates as holding the principle of the duty of joining a union are no doubt men who have a great grasp on the subject at hand. But in a matter of such importance we cannot depend on hearsay as to their real views. It is quite possible that they may hold such an opinion as a *personal* opinion but that they would not wish to be quoted *officially* on it. Only a specific statement from each of them would suffice as a public testimony. Even then, we would still have to know what other moral theologians of the Church have to say on the question before we could insist upon the moral obligation in question.

I communicated with Archbishop Mooney after his speech in Detroit in January asking just this question and I was informed that His Excellency was not speaking of the *duty* to join a union, but the duty of active interest in the labor organization to which a man belongs, if he prefers American freedom to communist, nazi or fascist regimentation.

Nell-Breuning, who is looked upon as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, interpreter of "Quadragesimo Anno," has an enlightening paragraph on the subject. He says: "To decide whether the conditions are verified under which Catholics are justified in joining nondenominational trade unions is not left to the individual but shall be reserved to the bishops. Whether or not membership in such unions is *permissible* depends upon their decision. . . . Catholic workers should, therefore, assure themselves in the first place whether the bishops consider membership in a mixed trade union advisable and unobjectionable; only then they should acquire membership."

Since the decision of the Bishops is necessary for *permission* to join such trade unions as we have in America, I think it hardly advisable on my part to urge membership as a moral obligation.

WILLIAM J. SMITH, S. J.

## DEATH OF A SOCIALIST

Providence, R. I.

**T**O the Editors: Two correspondents in THE COMMONWEAL for June 2, in discussing matters relating to "Death of a Socialist," take me to task under the charge of not accepting truth wherever it be found. . . .

Neither Anna Beatrice Murphy nor Francis L. Burke raised any point as to the correctness of my statement that the condition of wretchedness of the workers "can be brought about by means of pensions, minimum-wage laws, government ownership, and the too-shortened work day."

Marxism is not political socialism or communism. As presented by me in an article published September 21, 1918: "Socialism in reality is some undefined state of society which, it is prophesied, industrial evolution will bring into existence." On September 25, 1918, the then organ of political socialism, the New York *Call*, began an editorial with this paragraph: "*America* is a Catholic publication of high literary excellence and well-balanced

editorial judgment; one of the very few to be found in this country. Criticism in its columns is worthy of consideration, and it is only because of its high standing that we give some attention to an excellent analysis of socialism appearing in a recent issue."

It happens that on August 6, 1913, the *Call* carried a leading editorial which contained the following: "If the surplus value theory is unsound and the reasoning on which it is based will not stand every intellectual assault that may be directed against it, we want to know it. If it can be proven that the capitalist gets nothing from the laborer for which he does not return a full equivalent, then the bottom drops out of socialism."

Yet, in the editorial criticism of September 25, 1918, the *Call* said: "Labor power as an article, a commodity, has its value determined much in the same way that the value of any other article is determined, by its cost of production."

The *Call* thus gave evidence of knowing its political propaganda in the second excerpt, and of knowing its Marxian economics in the third. Because when labor is sold at its cost of production, and commodities are also sold at their cost of production, there can be no exploitation of labor in the process of giving employment to labor. Of course, this is so simple a truth that my critics will not accept it. . . .

The error that Catholic economists make is in considering capitalism "the profit system," when it ought to be apparent that industry, which pays out all money, cannot get back a dollar more than it pays out. The only profit under capitalism, or any other economic system, is interest on capital. Then the problem of interest is the chief economic problem, and was so considered by the Church, and even by the pagan philosophers, ever so many hundreds of years ago.

But we are told that truth and goodness "must be recognized where they appear," meaning particularly that we ought not condemn socialist demands that appear good to so many uninformed Catholics.

I have before me a circular published by "Socialist Party of the U. S. A., 549 Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois," and it contains the following:

"Every measure that improves conditions is welcomed and supported by the socialists, for many reasons. In fact, the socialist party was the first officially to urge old age pensions, unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, minimum wage laws, anti-child labor laws, and dozens of other measures now in effect. Such measures can stop some of the misery caused by capitalism, but the main reason for our favoring such measures is that, if logically carried out, they offer the possibility of peaceful, lawful and orderly transformation of society."

Of course, the measures numerated benefit some workers, but at the expense of other workers, and not at the expense of capitalists; so that the larger the coverage of such measures, the worse the condition of the workers as a whole, and the more susceptible are they to the wiles of political socialists, and this is "the main reason for our favoring such measures." Q. E. D.

M. P. CONNERY.



## Points & Lines

### *What Was Wrong in Austria*

**T**WO interesting analyses of Austrian corporatism, as it was organized under Dollfuss and Schusnigg, have recently been published. One, by Otto Maria Fidelis, appears as an article in *La Cité Chrétienne*, a Belgian Catholic weekly. It is extensively quoted below. Another, by Erich Hula, appears in *Social Research*, a quarterly published by the New York School for Social Research. Fidelis's chief points are two: that Austrian corporatism, good in its constitutional framework, was defective in that it did not do away with the fundamental abuses of capitalism and hence did not give labor an equivalent voice with capital in the social economy. His second point is related to this: that corporatism is not a mere political system, but must go hand in hand with a change in the constitution of society which shall deproletarianize the proletariat. In detail:

Austrian Catholics could not make their social experiment until they had decreed, in February, 1934, the dissolution of the socialist party, in despite of the then existing constitution, and until they had crushed its resistance in a bloody civil war. The fact that the socialist party condemned itself to this destruction by its inflexible combativeness could never wipe out among the men who were responsible for Catholic Austria, and notably Federal Chancellor Dollfuss, the realization that the renaissance which they were planning rested on a foundation of violence and bloody repression.

This points to Hula's main thesis, that the new organization of Austria should have worked with available organizations rather than suppressing them and starting fresh:

Only a few weeks later, in February, 1934, came the armed clash between the government and the social-democratic party, and following it the dissolution not only of the party but also of the social-democratic trade unions, representing the overwhelming majority of the Austrian workers. This destroyed the democratic basis on which alone the corporative structure could have been founded. I am not considering here the question of guilt, but only of the consequences which suppression of the free trade unions had upon the corporative experiment.

That this act of the government blocked rather than paved the way to a corporative society would remain true even if it were considered, from a purely political point of view, as justifiable or even necessary. The fascist tendencies of the Heimwehr, at that time the driving force among the government groups, soon suffered a setback and had not been, even at the time of their relatively greatest influence, strong enough to wipe out the democratic conception of corporativism. Therefore the Austrian corporative experiment became an attempt to reconcile what was fundamentally irreconcilable, the idea of economic democracy and the fascist framework which had been set for its realization. This attempt had not yet reached its climax, though it was obviously approaching it, when Austria perished.

Fidelis continues:

In a widely-noted article which appeared at almost the same time as the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," the *Osservatore Romano* warned the Catholics of the whole world against the use of the social doctrine of the Church as a

"blind" (paravento) behind which the excesses of capitalism could quietly continue to exist. In spite of the care with which the corporative organization of Austria was planned and the good intentions which attended its birth, careful and intelligent Catholic observers soon noticed that this first attempt at a general realization of Catholic corporatism had degenerated into a classic specimen of a "blind." The facts which make possible a proof of this thesis may be grouped under two headings: the attitude of employers and the attitude of the state. Let us consider them in detail.

What social relations prevailed between employers and workers?

1. The differences between the incomes of owners and those of workers did not diminish, but became greater in such a way that the profits of the more powerful classes did not cease growing; while among the working classes the minimum necessary for life was rarely attained. Certain single individuals each held more than thirty presidencies or managements; while the average monthly wage of adult workers supporting families rarely exceeded 150 schillings, which corresponds in purchasing power to about 600 Belgian francs [\$19.50]. Four thousand white-collar workers received salaries varying from 80 to 128 schillings, and numerous domestic workers had to content themselves with an hourly salary of .12 schilling. These growing differences were all the more irritating because the judicial situation, or to be more precise, the situation in the civil courts, was inequitable. Nobody prevented the managers of large enterprises from enriching themselves personally, often by means of doubtful machinations and sometimes even scandalously and criminally, as was the case with the largest of the Austrian insurance companies, the Phoenix, which was not made the object of judicial investigation. On the other hand, the denial of the right to strike deprived the worker of every legal means to better his condition.

On this point Hula's account does not quite agree with Fidelis's:

Restrictions of the right to strike, and also of the lockout, had already been decreed in 1933. They did not go so far as to forbid strikes altogether, but imposed an administrative penalty upon political strikes and, regardless of the motive, upon strikes in undertakings especially important for the common welfare. Trade disputes in such undertakings had to be settled by compulsory arbitration.

To return to Fidelis:

2. The exploitation of economic distress by the lowering of wages was a general phenomenon. And it produced even more irritating effects when the solemn promise of an adjustment in wages, when that should become possible, was broken. In the two automobile factories, Austriafiat and Saurer, the employees accepted a reduction of 20 percent in wages with the explicit promise from both managements to restore these cuts at the moment when conditions improved. Yet when conditions improved, as a result of armament orders, the managements refused any increase in salary and called upon the police to help them meet the threat of a strike.

3. The breaking of collective bargaining agreements had become the rule: overtime was not paid for; conditions of work were established by the employers alone. Owners regularly side-stepped the exercise of the worker's legal right to a paid holiday after a certain length of service by dismissing him a short time before the expiration of the specified time and re-employing him a few days later. In a particularly outrageous case of this sort, the Kary silk mill, the workers were able successfully to obtain the help of the police. But any appeal to the intervention of the police in social conflicts shows precisely how much social legislation has suffered.

4. A psychological factor which was particularly humiliating was the offensive attitude of numerous employers

toward their workmen and toward the representatives of the workers' organizations. The watchword everywhere in force was, "Since February you have no more to say; you have only to obey."

5. What was even more difficult to endure was the use of the corporative organization itself as an instrument of pressure on the workers. The story of the "Vienna Roll Contract" sadly illustrates this. The corporation of the bakers of Vienna complained that large baking establishments were creating exaggerated competition in the production of the white rolls which are so greatly esteemed in Vienna. Under the pressure of the corporative organizations, the big bakers therefore gave up the production of rolls and made only one condition: the workers who became superfluous and were laid off through this agreement were to be re-employed by the small bakers. The corporation accepted this condition in writing. But the bakers declared that each of them was the boss of his own enterprise and that nobody could force him to employ workmen. The laid-off workers brought suit against the bakers' corporation, which suit was repeatedly appealed and had not yet been settled when in 1938 a definitive close was brought to the corporative social set-up in Austria.

Now what did the state, the increased authority of which necessarily should have intervened, do to redress these conditions?

1. In the case of the breaking of the promise to increase salaries by the automobile factories, the government opposed any form of intervention; in the case of the "roll contract," it refused to take action which would be socially of equal force upon both parties; in the case of the Phoenix Company, it rendered nugatory the judicial persecution of those who were guilty. In all these cases, it was not good will which inspired the government's attitude, but the fear of increasing confusion in the country by serious intervention in economical life. Such intervention took place only with regard to the affairs of the economically weak. . . .

Four further points are dealt with; he continues:

It can be said that corporatism in Austria could not solve the social question any more than it could improve the economic position of the country or even of the middle classes. No more did it destroy class war; it merely hid it. How can one explain this failure? Here is the most difficult problem of Catholic sociology.

The fault did not lie with the plan or the organization of Austrian corporatism. So completely liberal a scholar as Wilhelm Roepke, at the present time professor in Istanbul, frankly acknowledged the validity of Austrian corporatism. A former social democrat deputy in the German Reichstag, Wilhelm Sollmann, has recently publicly declared himself a believer in the corporative idea, and expressly based the reason for his conviction on the Austrian experiment. And Catholics have even less reason to doubt the worth and the importance of Papal recommendations. But in Austria a fundamental mistake was made concerning the true significance of the corporative idea, and since this misunderstanding does not exist in Austria alone, the phrase *Austria docet* . . . has even greater significance.

In Austria it was believed that corporatism, following out the recommendations of the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," had been perfectly realized by the creation and the organization of all economic activity in corporations. But the capitalist system, without limitations, was allowed to continue and the power of the great accumulations of capital was not touched. Naturally they obtained ascendancy in the corporations to the great harm of small business men; thus these great accumulations of capital blocked a law regulating cartels. They went so far as to transform the corporations into industrial sovereignties, of which they became the all-powerful heads.

The theorists of Austrian corporatism could not understand the enigma of this development, which they had not

at all desired. From the beginning they had neglected a very important factor: the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" does not look for a solution of the social problem from a mere institution of the corporate order but rather from the corporate order of a society which has realized the deproletarianization of the proletariat. In Austria not once was this process attempted. On the contrary. For instance, sensible proposals for settling people on the land were abandoned on the ground that it would not bring an economic return. The establishment of the family wage was blocked on the ground of the heavy expenses which this would entail for corporations and taxpayers. The proletariat was not deproletarianized, and the new political organization threatened even to perpetuate the proletarian condition of the mass of the people.

Corporatism represents an organization of society and not an organization of the state. The Austrian experiment has very clearly taught us the political significance of a corporative organization of society. Even in the Middle Ages the strong independence of the corporations had many times and in many countries destroyed the state. Increasing the power of present economic forces makes it even more necessary for the state to have strong authority, as a balance to social corporative organization. This necessity is very clearly stated in the Austrian constitution of May 1, 1934. It is characterized by the suppression of political parties. The unexpected consequences of this suppression were particularly serious. The Catholic government of Austria did not wish to be totalitarian, but authoritarian. But the suppression of parties pushed politics in the direction of totalitarianism and made the head of the government a dictator in spite of himself. . . .

Hula says somewhat the same thing, but more particularly in a framework of political reference:

Many times from 1934 to 1938 Austria was praised as the state envisioned in "Quadragesimo Anno." Nothing could be less justified than such a pretension, in so far as it referred, as it usually did, to the authoritarian form of government established by Dollfuss in 1933 and legalized by the constitution of 1934. At no point does the encyclical deal specifically with the problem of the form of the state, and where it does touch on this problem it merely repeats what Leo XIII had expounded in his encyclical "Immortale Dei" of 1885: that men are entirely free to choose any form of government they like, provided that it be not at variance with justice and the requirements of the common good. In accordance with this teaching Seipel and the other Christian Socialists had in their time taken an active part in drafting the democratic constitution of 1920. Nor can it be said that "Quadragesimo Anno" indirectly suggests that the corporative reform of society which it favors either presupposes or involves an abandonment of the democratic state and the democratic party system. So little is the encyclical concerned about the constitution of the state that it does not even raise the question of whether and in what way the corporations should be represented in the legislative and administrative bodies of the state.

"Quadragesimo Anno" starts from the assumption that the cure for the evils of our time lies not so much in a reform of the state, but in a reform of society. Needless to say, the Pope, as representative and guardian of spiritual and moral values, considers human regeneration in God to be the indispensable prerequisite for any successful institutional reform. This is not merely a moral exhortation, but is the expression of his deeply rooted conviction, borne out by the teachings of history, that institutions as such do not mean much if the right spirit is lacking. If he did not at the same time recognize the reciprocal influence of institutions upon men, he would not be so much concerned about the present state of society.

Fidelis concludes with the following analysis of the actual contribution of the Austrian Church:



It should not be forgotten that even if Catholic social doctrine served as ideology for this whole system, it is yet an historical fact, which it will only be possible later to trace, that the Church in Austria opposed, at the outset, the proposed new system. Cardinal Innitzer did not wish to give any support to the suppression of democracy, and even in the fall of 1933 threatened an official coolness between the Church and the government. This attitude did not continue later on. Suppression of the socialist party and the guarantee of concessions in educational matters were advantages which could not easily be resisted.

But the Church was to pay dearly for these concessions: in the new authoritarian state she was greatly honored, but absolutely deprived of influence, and the more she was honored, the more her complicity in the social mistakes, for which she was not responsible, was taken for granted by public opinion. When Federal Chancellor Schusnigg, harassed by the repeated insistence upon the respect due to the objectives of "Quadragesimo Anno," at last declared in the autumn of 1937: "The organization of the Austrian State has nothing to do with the encyclical," this statement brought relief but it also was a confession. Like a vengeful nemesis, the destruction of the state followed this declaration. But it was above all the Church which suffered from this destruction. The Catholic Church of Austria is expiating in a great persecution the faults of Austrian Catholics.

### Government-Business

PERIODICALLY the relationships between government and business receive unusually direct attention, rumors grow and various tentative steps are taken designed to increase business's self-confidence. Currently more than half a dozen specific measures are under discussion. First is the tax adjustment. Suggestions offered by Secretary Morgenthau and his assistant, Mr. Hanes, are summed up thus by *Newsweek*:

- (1) Elimination of the undistributed profits tax; (2) substitution of a flat 18 percent on corporate income over \$25,000; (3) changes in the present 12½ to 16 percent levies on small corporations; (4) repeal of the capital-stock and excess-profits levies; (5) an arrangement to permit revaluation of stock annually instead of every three years; (6) a change to allow business to carry over net losses for two or three years; (7) removal of state and federal securities from their present tax-exempt status; lowering of the surtax in the highest brackets to coax out "risk" capital.

The Chamber of Commerce, naturally, approves in general. Its desires go further, according to an AP dispatch:

A spokesman for the United States Chamber of Commerce suggested to Congress imposition of a flat rate normal corporation tax of 15 percent and outright repeal of the undistributed profits levy.

#### *Business Week* judges:

If business does revive after the passage of the tax bill—whether the bill has anything to do with it or not—chances for the nomination of a New Dealer, either Roosevelt or someone else, will improve immeasurably, and the prospects for the Republicans winning control of the government in 1940 will be proportionately dimmed. . . . If business does not revive after the passage of the tax bill now being rushed through, the New Deal will say to the country: "You see, business simply won't play ball. It is on a sit-down strike. The government must take care of the needy. . . ." More spending and lending would start, and critics of the New Deal, both within and without the Democratic party, would have a much tougher time making their points click with the voters. . . .

The magazine *America* writes:

If inquiries are made as to the cause of this general [slumping] trend, the answer is invariably "Taxes," and in particular the undistributed profits tax. No assessment levied on business has struck so fatally at the heart of our commerce. It robs business of its main means of security and strikes at the very prospect of progress and expansion. Practical—not theoretical—business experts have been unanimous in their condemnation of this tax measure. Encouraging, then, was the news that Congress was resolved on a thorough revision of the present tax legislation. But more encouraging still was the assurance from President Roosevelt that he would not oppose the abolition of his favored measure.

Besides changes in taxes, the most interesting move in Washington was toward a government guarantee system for business loans. But there was movement on many other fronts, too. *Barron's* sums up the present New Deal plan:

As accurately as can be forecast in such a bewildering picture, the new program will include:

More spending. Inside New Dealers are talking about asking another \$1,000,000,000-or-so for PWA-type projects, in addition to the \$1,750,000,000 already requested for work-relief.

The Mead Bill—Applying the FHA principle of government guaranty of private-banking loans to business up to 90 percent. Which means still more spending, or at least a greater government obligation. Some conservatives support this on the grounds that it is one way that the government can stimulate private enterprise, as it certainly has in FHA, without taking much risk.

Standing pat on the Wagner Act, with changes in rules of NLRB (such as that employers can ask elections) and change in point of view if the new board-member, Dr. Leiserson, can bring it about.

Pointing-with-pride (which has already begun) to help-business tax amendments, all of which, except the freezing of the payroll tax at current levels, were accepted by the President only after it had been pointed out that Congress had the whip-hand. . . .

Stressing the service office by Hopkins's new industrial bureau and a "vigorous but discriminating" enforcement of anti-laws by Attorney General Frank Murphy. . . .

The selected members of the Business Advisory Council of private businessmen who met with the President and Secretary Hopkins were reported by Hopkins to have wanted important changes in the Wagner Act, but the administration has given no indication it will do anything in that direction. If there are no amendments to the Act this session, the House is expected to investigate the Labor Board this summer.

New Deal spending, which all observers expect to see speeded up, may take a new form. T. R. B. of the *New Republic* predicts:

The variety of spending urged by New Dealers, and set forth by Mr. Berle before the monopoly committee, is brilliantly suited to salve Mr. Roosevelt's budget-balancing Dutch conscience. It envisages the creation of a government-owned finance corporation, with authority to issue obligations. It could thus loan its own funds to states, counties and municipalities, and these loans would not need to appear in the 1939-40 budget, nor as part of the national debt. While it could not make outright grants of money, it would be empowered to set arbitrary interest rates, which amounts to the same thing. Except for conversational purposes, it makes little difference to a city wishing to build a \$200,000 hospital whether it receives a \$100,000 PWA loan at four percent, together with a grant of \$100,000, or is given a loan of \$200,000 at two percent.

## The Stage & Screen

### *The Ballet Caravan*

THIS new organization of dancers under the direction of Lincoln Kirstein, with Fritz Kitzinger as conductor, should make a place for itself. The dancers are young, very good to look upon, technically proficient and in some cases far more than that. Of the principals Lew Christensen, Eugene Loring and Marie-Jeanne are perhaps outstanding, but all dance with grace, spirit and often with imagination. Of the numbers given the most interesting are "Billy the Kid," music by Aaron Copland, choreography by Eugene Loring, and "Filling Station," music by Virgil Thomson, choreography by Lew Christensen. Both of these ballets are thoroughly American both in the pattern of the dancing and in the ironic approach to the material. In addition Aaron Copland's music in "Billy the Kid" is delightfully fresh and characteristic. "Pocahontas," music by Elliott Carter, is rather of a bore, but the classic ballet to the music of Bach's "Goldberg Variations" is charmingly danced by Marie-Jeanne, Lew Christensen and the corps de ballet. Of course the Ballet Caravan owes much to the Russian dancers and choreographers, but it has not stopped with them. Most of its material and music, like its dancers and directors, is American. American too is the gusto and freshness of its dancing. It ought to live and flourish. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

### *Springfield to Titipu to Green City*

"YOUNG MR. LINCOLN" might better be called "Incident in the Life of Lincoln." The film, based on Lamar Trotti's screenplay, centers around 1837 Springfield and Lincoln's saving the two sons of Abigail Clay first from lynching and then from the gallows. The 1832 episodes in New Salem are sketchily done; if Ann Rutledge meant very much to young Abe, one would never know it from this version. In fact most of the standard biographical scenes are avoided and emphasis is placed on character, with repeated inferences and hints of the future. Mary Todd smirks at Abe possessively. Stephen A. Douglas decides he must respect him. Abe reminisces, tells many stories and plays "Dixie" on a Jews-harp. Lack of excitement, understatement and John Ford's careful and extremely slow direction give "Young Mr. Lincoln" an air of actuality. This is further enhanced by Henry Fonda's smooth underplaying and Alice Brady's excellent performance as the suffering and noble mother of the two boys accused of the famous "moonlight murder." Darryl F. Zanuck's production in no way competes with "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," now playing on the New York stage and soon to be filmed with its star, Raymond Massey. Although "Young Mr. Lincoln" is nicely done, it does not have the depth, poetry or historical importance of the Robert Sherwood play.

What with Hot and Swing Mikados, it was inevitable that Gilbert and Sullivan should crash the movies. They

have and with thoroughly satisfactory results. As adapted (minus a few of the lines and songs) and conducted by Geoffrey Toye, "The Mikado," excellently recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra and the D'Oyly Carte chorus, should meet with the approval of devotees of the Gilbert and Sullivan cult.

"The Sun Never Sets" on the British Empire or on Hollywood films about it. The latest endeavor, directed by Rowland V. Lee, is a modern melodrama as full of adventures and absurdities as a 1920 serial. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. (who survived "Gunga Din"), resents going into the service, but allows his grandfather, C. Aubrey Smith, and his brother, Basil Rathbone, to sell him on family tradition and the empire's glories. Doug and Basil and the latter's wife, Barbara O'Neil, get down to the African Gold Coast where things are an awful mess 'cause Lionel Atwill isn't really a scientist studying ants but a munitions baron cheating the natives and trying to foment a world war by broadcasting to the entire globe from his hidden radio station. All the old devices are revived: fever, quinine, rain, natives, sweaty faces, the dictator-minded villain, the elder brother disgraced by the younger's error, the younger finding the radio station; the British Empire and the world are saved! Britannia rules the waves!

"The City," photographed and directed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke, is a "must." At the present time this four-reel documentary, which was produced by Oscar Serlin and financed by the Carnegie Corporation, is being shown at the New York World's Fair; but it is hoped that its sponsors, the American Institute of Planners, will exhibit it throughout the country for it stands as an excellent example of factual cinematic art. "The City" opens with restful shots of New England villages in the old days when "the town was us and we were part of it." But the scene changes and we are in the industrial city—factories, smoke, grimy and poverty-stricken houses, children playing in alleys. Cities are no longer a fit place for living. The metropolis is disorder turned into steel and stone with crowds hurrying, confusion, children in gutters, rush, accidents, fires, sandwiches gulped at counters. At this point the photography, Lewis Mumford's narration (spoken by Morris Carnovsky) and Aaron Copland's music fuse into perfect oneness. You are sure your stomach will revolt if one more ham sandwich is shoved into one more gaping mouth as slices of toast pop out of one machine and pancakes are made automatically on another. When the citizens flee from this pandemonium, they are caught in the "endless city," the congestion of the concrete highway. Traffic becomes a cacaphony of slow, no right turn, no left turn, no turn, no no no, stop stop stop.—And the only answer is the "Green City," made possible by foresight. Already there are many of these smaller communities planned for living. Landscaped and well designed highways, neat, airy houses, favorable working conditions, playgrounds—all these are shown in Green Cities now existing. This part of the film is not as lively as the other scenes, but perhaps with a little more living in, with the addition of churches and schools, these Green Cities can become "home." "The City" should be seen by many, by thoughtful, by civic-minded people.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.



## Books of the Day

### Shuster on Veblen

*Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution, by Thorstein Veblen. New York: The Viking Press. \$3.00.*

THIS BOOK originally appeared in 1915, was cordially disliked in various quarters and would be forgotten had not a faithful group of Veblenites insisted upon its revival this year. It is worth the effort, and worth also the criticism to which it must be subjected. Veblen was one of the ablest of economic determinists; but though he ruled out of his plan for a scientific analysis of modern history all forces he deemed "magical," he nevertheless realized that these forces exist and was irked by them, as his tendency to wax ironical concerning them abundantly demonstrates. There resulted a certain peripheral gullibility all his own, which accounts for what is vague and outmoded in his books—the insistence, for example, upon a demonstrable continuity of racial inheritance and so on the value of a speculative study of prehistory. To make up for all this, however, he had really brilliant ideas concerning the nature of industrial power and its relation to military and political might.

Any brief summary of these ideas necessarily does them considerable injustice. Veblen sees Germany as a region which for various reasons lagged behind the western countries in the development of political and industrial life. The result was that when unity was achieved in 1870, the Germans were still a subservient people who had not managed under particularistic princedoms to achieve that status of personal, civic and commercial independence which other nations now regarded as a permanent acquisition. The industrial revolution had likewise transformed England before Germany ceased to be a handicraft society. Time was therefore needed to overcome these handicaps and to acquire the techniques both of trade and of decent living. Under these circumstances, the leadership of Prussia was inevitable, for Prussia was the very incarnation of dynastic feudalism—of that code which applies to the processes of capitalistic exploitation the same rules that make war successful.

The lag in development was a handicap but had distinct advantages. In the first place the wastage attendant upon any revolution could be avoided by a country enabled to copy the achievement of that revolution—and according to Veblen the Germans have been copyists since time immemorial. This process he illustrates in what is, perhaps, his most brilliant chapter, "The Case in England." Here is described the baggage the English carry about with them in the shape of "depauperate" workmen, outmoded but heavily capitalized equipment, and inadequate transportation systems. There is also a sense in which the development of "anarchic" individualism hampers efficiency. For example, when men are free to take a rousing interest in sport, they are necessarily distracted by this avocation and waste time on it which they could devote to production and exploitation. Germany, however, could start with a clean slate. She had no industrial equipment, she could ape the latest English methods. And she also had a fresh, unused population accustomed to subservience, and constituting therefore human material of greater potential efficiency than that of any other European state.

But doubtless her most serious problem lay in the fact that the dynastic leadership of Prussia was based on mili-

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tary aggressiveness, and that thenceforth the policy of that dynasty necessarily became the aim of the German state. Veblen refers in passing to the weakness of South Germany's protest against Prussian leadership—weakness not to be identified too hastily with the collapse of opposition to Hitler, though a parallel does exist. In many instances, Veblen's insight into the nature of the Prussian outlook seems almost uncanny. The following passage was written in 1915 (!): "Temperamentally erratic individuals, however, and such as are schooled by special class traditions or predisposed by special class interests, will readily see the merits of warlike enterprise and keep alive the traditions of national animosity. . . . Where it happens that an individual gifted with an extravagant congenital bias of this character is at the same time exposed to circumstances favoring the development of a truculent megalomania and is placed in such a position of irresponsible authority and authentic prerogative as will lend countenance to his idiosyncracies, his bent may easily gather vogue, become fashionable, and with due persistence and shrewd management come so ubiquitously into habitual acceptance as in effect to throw the population at large into a bellicose frame of mind."

So much of this is true and so much is corroborated by the more recent literature on the subject of Prussianism (e.g., F. W. Foerster's "Europa und die deutsche Frage") that one is disarmed by the intelligence and luminousness of Veblen's intuitions. Nevertheless there is a great deal in the book to which I cannot subscribe. The diagnosis of German racial characteristics seems flub-dub, especially in so far as the trait of "copying" is concerned. It is surely always the late arrival who copies—otherwise, looking at New Haven gothic, one would be hard put to account for the duality of the Anglo-Saxon. And I am sure no historical explanation will do which fails to analyze the catastrophic effects of the Thirty Years' War, which transformed Germany from the most progressive region in Europe (witness, for example, the prowess of the Hanseatic cities in Tudor times) into that congeries of stiff-backed little autocracies which eventually provided Prussia with its historic setting. One might argue to some effect that had it not been for Richelieu the weight would in the seventeenth century have shifted permanently to South and West Germany, where an old and free culture was constantly alive. And of course one could add that after 1918 the shift actually took place, then to be nullified again by the stupidity of outside attitudes, including that of the United States. Yet for all of that Veblen's book is worth digging up and very well worth reading.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

#### HISTORY

*Five Cities*, by George R. Leighton. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$3.50.

WHO is primarily responsible for opening up the vast expanse of the United States? Many of us would nominate Daniel Boone, Rogers and Clark and other adventuresome explorers or zealous missionaries such as Junipéro Serra and Père Marquette. Others would recall the wagon trains that streamed westward with more and more bands of settlers to clear and till the land. Yet the expansion of our country probably was in fact considerably less romantic. According to Mr. Leighton it was downright sordid, and those who think this pioneering spirit might be revived to solve the problems of our new, protracted-depression frontier had better read this book.

Shenandoah, Pa., serves as an exhibit of the opening up of the great Eastern coal industry—an enterprise marked by the most inhuman of working conditions, the stirring up of racial-national antagonisms and the counter-terrorism of the Molly Maguires. The commercial center, Louisville, Ky., served principally as a feeder for the Louisville and Nashville Railway and its many financial subsidiaries. Birmingham, Ala., the hope of the Southern industrialists, existed in a state of continuous depression and desperate poverty and even descended to the system of convict leases to impound poor wretches to work in the mines. Omaha, Neb., the gateway to the Far West, was the prey of railroad and livestock promoters together with a vicious city political machine. Seattle, Wash., was the last port of call for disappointed Alaskan prospectors, unemployed seamen, lumberjacks and wretched derelicts of various types; it gave birth to short-lived movements of protest like Populism and the I.W.W.

The author traces many of these conditions directly to the ruthless and sometimes picturesque individualists, who in order to rise to power or win a fortune actually opened up the country. In succeeding generations control of these vast enterprises passed to an even more heartless force—Wall Street, cold, impersonal and parasitic. And meanwhile the ground-down laborers in mines and lumber-camps, the farmers whose livelihood was so dependent on the railroads and a few socially-minded people tried to oppose this tyranny of economic power. Populists, Knights of Labor and I.W.W. flared up momentarily and lost out in their unequal struggle for human rights.

Such is the kernel of Mr. Leighton's story and "Five Cities" makes exciting reading. It is well documented. The narrative is dotted with little Napoleons of the economic and political order. It brings to life colorful labor leaders and prototypes of hard-pressed worker families of those bare-knuckle, brass-knuckle days. But with all the author's documentation the picture is overdrawn; it borders too much on the sensational to be taken completely at its face value.

As a historical study the book would have been better balanced and more convincing if it had paid more attention to nineteenth century leaders of another stamp, to the figures in various parts of our great country like the "brave men and women [of Birmingham] . . . who sometimes alone, sometimes by two and three, refused to give way before ignorance, fear and rapacity; who with all the shortcomings to which human flesh is heir, yet wrought with tireless hands through crowded days and sometimes gave their lives that 'equal justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion' might actually come to pass in a region where democracy never had a chance."

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

*Revolutions and Dictatorships*, by Hans Kohn. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. \$3.50.

THIS is a disappointing book for various reasons. The most important one is the unwillingness of the author, intentionally or unconsciously, to present an unbiased picture of the dictatorships he discusses. This indisposition is evident in several of the dozen essays that constitute this volume. In general the book is a condemnation of dictatorships and a complimentary analysis of the accomplishments of democracy. However the tendency to condemn fascism and its degenerate offspring, nazism, and at the same time to minimize the repulsive features of communism, is strongly marked. The author is definitely



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We are told, for instance, that "the dictatorship of fascism is charismatic, nationalistic and permanent; the dictatorship of communism is rational, universalistic and temporary," and again, after discussing the absence of individual rights under fascism, we are informed, "The Constitutions of the Soviet Republics that are members of the U.S.S.R. contain all these natural liberal rights of the individual in their first chapters." Remarks of that kind are continually being made by the author, and they are either definitely wrong or misleading. The author realizes very well that liberty of conscience, the most important individual right imaginable, is denied in practice in the U.S.S.R. Many unwarranted assumptions are scattered pontifically throughout the chapters. Apparently the author desired to make every conclusion startling rather than reasonable. He is very displeased because of the success of facism and naziism, and comes perilously close to regretting that communism has not had a like experience. Unfortunately this book may develop quite a following among some uncritical undergraduates, and also among such intellectuals as consider every printed statement to be a fact. It will foster a misplaced faith in the evil of communism as exemplified in the atheistic communism of the U.S.S.R.

PAUL KINIERY.

*Introduction to Argentina, by Alexander Wilbourn Weddell. New York: The Greystone Press. \$3.00.*

AMBASSADOR WEDDELL has made this book his farewell to the Argentine Republic. For over five years, this diplomat from Virginia has served the United States in one of the most significant posts in Hispanic America and the appearance of this volume coincides almost exactly with his transfer to the embassy at Madrid. For this reason, this small work may be termed a summary of experience and observation as well as a guide written by one who obviously finds the Argentine people and scene much to his taste.

The reader bent on discovering the profundities of Argentine life or political vicissitudes need not look here. The references to the historical, sociological and political aspects of the nation are very slight and made entirely secondary to the broader purpose of giving the reader a genial and sympathetic picture of modern Argentina. At the same time, it is a valuable and useful guide book to this great South American nation. Aside from Mexico and the West Indies, there does not exist a Baedeker for the countries of this hemisphere whose speech is Spanish. The average guide book is woefully deficient and inadequate. Ambassador Weddell tells the curious reader how to get to Argentina and by the same token how to get out; when to visit the country; what to wear (both men and women) and what to do, see and eat once one is on the ground. Argentina means Buenos Aires to so many travelers or at the most the capital city plus the plains region on the overland jaunt to Chile. With the frequency and excellency of the air service, even this much of the interior is relegated to an unimportant place in the traveler's scheme of things. Mr. Weddell describes briefly the excursions near Buenos Aires, the river trips to Iguazú and Asunción and the interior cities of Tucuman and Cordoba. All this is to the good, to the end that the vastness and variety of the Argentine may be manifest. The appendices are particularly curious in giving the reader information

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on such varied topics as fishing in Nahuel Huapi, travel agencies to be consulted and where to take tea.

The book is light in character, written by one enamored of the Argentine. It is not profound nor destined for the reader eager to learn of the vital forces at work in Argentina. For the traveler and casual reader it will prove an effective aid. For the student, it will at least portray Argentina as a pleasant place to visit or to live.

RICHARD PATTEE.

*Feudal Island*, by Desmond Holdridge. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

FOR THOSE of us who, on our way to Rio, have flown over Marajo Island at the mouth of the Amazon, Desmond Holdridge's new book holds both interest and disappointment. We have seen those grouped specks that might be herds of wild water-buffalo originally brought from Italy's Pontine Marshes, or some of the island's many thousands of zebu-crossed meat cattle. We have wondered what goes on in and around those ranch-houses that appear as dark, rectangular spottings on that irregular pattern of flat pasture-land, swamp and jungle. But Mr. Holdridge withholds too much that we want to know and that we know he knows, only to waste our time unduly on personal and conversational trivialities.

But we do learn that Marajo is remote, feudal, primitive, cruel. The highest elevations are 75 foot mounds full of relics of a vanished Maya-like race. Rich ranchmen ride regularly on saddled oxen—"an ungodly sight until you get used to it."

As for Brazil—in Mr. Holdridge's opinion, the Vargas dictatorship is a "typically Brazilian arrangement designed to solve particularly Brazilian problems."

Viewing our sadly disturbed world from that Amazonian delta he knows so well, the author reflects that the money we spend on armaments, with "scientific colonization," could make that great valley of the Amazon "swallow the superfluous populations of all the earth and leave room for many more to come." B. P. ADAMS.

## PHILOSOPHY

*The Making of Philosophy*, by André Brémond, S. J. New York: Benziger Brothers. \$1.75.

MOST BOOKS intended to serve as an introductory key to the mysteries of philosophy seem as though they were written either by morons or for morons. "The Making of Philosophy," by André Brémond, S. J., is a happy exception to this rule. It is a truism that the principles of scholastic philosophy can be best understood in the light of their historical origins. Sometimes this means an occasional quotation from Saint Thomas, thrown out as a bone is tossed to a stray dog. Sometimes it means going right back to the early Greek philosophers and tracing the hard birth of ideas in their historical setting. Father Brémond does even better, for he goes back to the pre-historic cave-man—a tracing of historical roots with a vengeance.

Father Brémond uses the meditations of his cave-man, Uya, to show us the first simple ideas which are the start of philosophy for any man—ideas which spring from the instinct of wonder questioning the mystery of reality. Uya is a charming cave-man—much nicer than H. G. Wells's cave-man, after whom he is modeled. His wife, Eudena, seems an interesting woman, too: the first, though by no means the last, philosopher's wife to be impatient of her husband's nonsense. Uya met a sad end. He is the



first case on record of brain-fever—*delirium tremens philosophicum*.

Our historical development continues: we rise to the meditations of the shepherd and the ploughman. Just to keep the record complete, we have also brief meditations by the shepherd's dog and by the oxen and the donkey. With all this help, we gain an insight into those simple, but profound, ideas which lay at the beginning of any right attempt at philosophizing—wonder and mystery, order and law, the enigma of man, of life, of God.

After this thoroughly admirable introduction, we are led to the Pre-Socratics, to Socrates, to Plato and to Aristotle. Here again the author's approach is fresh, simple and illuminating. The work ends with chapters on Descartes and the "Wonder of Knowing." The latter chapter alone would make the book worth while.

The style of writing is unusually light and cheerful for a book on philosophy. In fact, one could probably find enough material in it for a pedantic article on "The Influence of P. G. Wodehouse on the Life and Writings of André Brémond, S. J." Percy Perkington-Perry of Parkminster is a philosophical Bertie Wooster, and there is more than a touch of the domineering Lady Constance in Eudena, the cave-man's wife.

Father Brémond's skill, however, does not stop at the whimsical or the mock-serious. The author's love and deep knowledge of the literary wealth of Athens, of England and of France enriches the work throughout. His prose is smooth and rhythmical. Nor is Father Brémond lacking that touch of the poet without which you cannot have the true philosopher.

This is an admirable introduction to philosophy for any reader who does not collapse at the sight of language more elegant than that employed in the tabloids or who is equipped to deal with literary allusions other than from Longfellow or Edgar Guest. It can serve, too, to revitalize the ideas of the more advanced philosopher—and if the philosopher feels he is too advanced, it is worth reading for its literary merit alone. In short, this is a thoroughly delightful work, one which any reader would do well to have in his library.

DANIEL SULLIVAN.

#### POETRY

*Sonnets and Verse*, by Hilaire Belloc. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.

THERE are some books, and this is one of them, which are the joy and bane of the reviewer; books whose real excellence defeats criticism and at once forbids the usual trite language of praise. Such books require and demand thumping affirmations, such as Mr. Hugh Walpole makes on the jacket of this book. "Here are the collected poems of the greatest, living English poet," says Mr. Walpole, and so say we.

The intellection exhibited in the sonnets, the bitter sarcasm of the satires, the pith and wit of the epigrams, the suggestion of the *lacrimae rerum* in such poems as "Ha'nacker Mill" and "The Rebel," the mingled poetry and buffoonery of the "Dedicatory Ode" have not been matched in our time. Least of all have they been approached by that young and ubiquitous group of Oxford super-journalists who will be the first to deprecate such poems as these in favor of their own curious hodge-podge of raw romanticism, solemn self-praise and Marxian dialectic. The only man who might have challenged Mr. Belloc is now dead—the Chesterton who wrote "Lepanto" and the "Ballad of the White Horse."

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

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**T**HIS ISSUE of THE COMMONWEAL is a "social action" issue; its appearance roughly coincides with the National Catholic Social Action Congress in Cleveland, discussed elsewhere in these pages. To give a more complete picture of what is to take place at this congress, here is a summary of the program. On Monday, June 12, four sectional meetings are to take place with the following topics: American Economic Life, Building Trades, Trucking, and Women in Industry. Forum meetings, later that afternoon, will develop these subjects and take up others of a more detailed nature. In the evening there is to be a mass meeting, dedicated to the "theme" of the congress: "The Principles of a Christian Democracy."

Tuesday will have sectional meetings on the following subjects: Parts Manufacture, Coal, Credit and Money, Railroads, Law, Agriculture, Youth, Printing, Steel, Rubber, and A Changing America.

Wednesday has sectional meetings as follows: Priests Meeting, Lay Organizations—Men, Lay Organizations—Women, and Medical Profession. There will be luncheon for the N.C.W.C. and for lay organizations, and in the evening a general meeting on the topic, "Next Steps."

The entire program is under the direction of the social action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in collaboration with the school of social sciences of the Catholic University of America and the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems. The American Catholic Sociological Society, the ACTU, the *Catholic Worker* and the *Christian Front* are all active participants. The meetings are being held in the Cleveland Public Auditorium; it is expected that in addition to many hundred visitors from other sections of the country, thousands from the Cleveland area will participate. It is particularly appropriate that the congress be held in Cleveland, whose Bishop this year celebrates his fiftieth anniversary as a priest and who is the last surviving signer of the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction, issued 20 years ago.

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Rev. John F. CRONIN, S.S., is professor of economics at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Md. His book, "Economics and Society," was reviewed in our last issue.

Louise OWEN lives in New Hampshire. Her verse has appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Yale Review*, the *Saturday Evening Post*.

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John LODGE, jr., is the pseudonym of a St. Paul, Minn., journalist. Sister M. PHILIP, C.S.C., is stationed at St. Agnes High School, Los Angeles.

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George N. SHUSTER, the author of many books, is a contributing editor of THE COMMONWEAL. His latest work was in connection with editing the Reynal & Hitchcock edition of Hitler's "Mein Kampf."

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J. G. E. HOPKINS writes verse and short stories and teaches at Loyola School, New York.

Through inadvertence the name of Rev. E. Harold SMITH, author of the article on Monsignor Ryan, was omitted in this place last week. Father Smith is a priest of the Archdiocese of New York at present doing graduate work at the Catholic University of America.